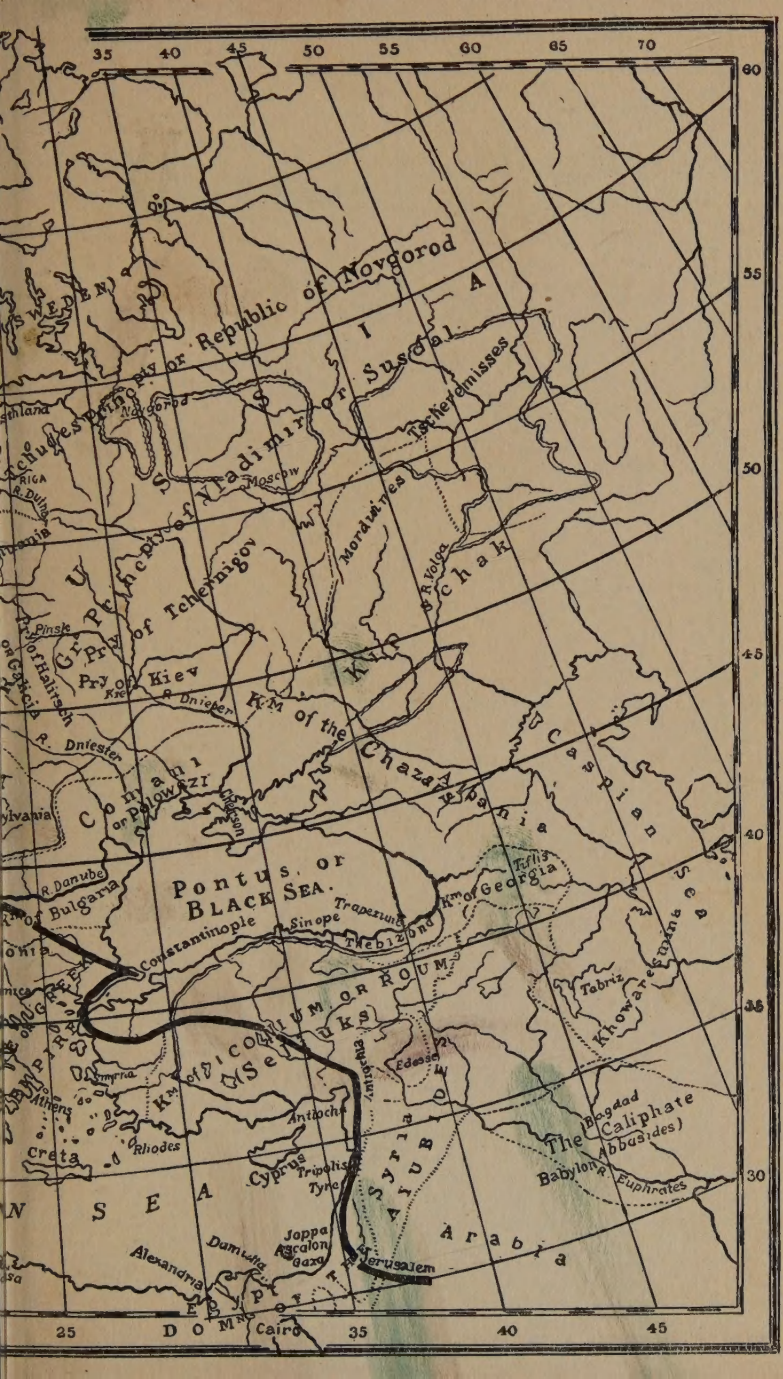
School of Theology at Claremont
1001 1418031

Mediaeval Jews

Harris

Illustrated

EUROPE
FROM
CHARLEMAGNE TO THE CRUSADERS
800-1100 A.C.E.
This line shows route of the Crusaders.
Scale of English Miles.
0 50 100 200 300
ATLANTIC OCEAN
North Sea
Shetland Is
Orkney Is
Scotland
Ireland
Dublin
Wales
Kn of England
London
Bruges
Ypres
Antwerp
Utrecht
Kn of Denmark
Gotaland
Hamburg
Saxony
Bohemia
Prague
Austria
Cologne
Lorraine
Mainz
Metz
Worms
Amiens
Paris
Orleans
Champagne
Tours
Limoges
Burgundy
Strasbourg
Basle
Venice
Croatia
Dalmatia
Ancona
Rome
Dy of Apulia
Naples
Sardinia
Corsica
Majorca
Barcelona
Catalonia
Aragon
Toledo
Saragossa
Navarre
Toulouse
Marseilles
Portugal
Kn of Leon
Oporto
Lisbon
Cordova
Cadiz
Granada
Seville
Algiers
Palermo
Sicily
Messina
Tunis
Mahadia
Gozo
Malta
Tripoli
Barca
Morocco
Kn of Fez
Almeria
Carthagena
Kn of the Almohades or Maghreb
Kn of Maghreb or Morocco
MEDITERRANEAN
EMPIRE OF CHARLEMAGNE
KINGDOM OF FRANCE
KINGDOM OF ITALY
KINGDOM OF GERMANY
EMPIRE OF THE KINGDOM OF FRANCE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25
Principality or Republic of Novgorod
Vladimir or Suscal
Tcheremisses
Moscow
Mordavites
Volga
Tchak
Principality of Tchernigov
Principality of Kiev
Kiow
Dniester
Dnieper
Kingdom of the Chazars
Caspian Sea
Comani or Polowtzi
Pontus, or BLACK SEA.
Constantinople
Sinope
Trapezus
Trebizond
Kingdom of Georgia
Tiflis
Tabriz
Khowarezmian Sea
Iconium or Roum
Seljukes
Edessa
Antioch
Cyprus
Tripolis
Tyre
Syria
Arabia
The Caliphate of Bagdad (Abbassides)
Babylon
Euphrates
Rhodes
Creta
Athens
Alexandria
Damietta
Joppa
Ascalon
Gaza
Jerusalem
Egypt
Cairo
Sea
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INTRODUCTION.

Jewish history in the Middle Ages is, broadly speaking, European; hitherto it had been Asiatic. The story of the Jews of the epoch here treated is largely a Spanish story; and in so far as it is Spanish, it is largely a literary story. Long deprived of State power and prestige, their work is confined to the academy and the study. The Jewish Chazar Kingdom is hardly an exception, for, like Jonah's gourd, "it came up in a night and withered in a night."

It is true that in the Peninsula the Jews did exercise a kind of political power, but it was "behind thrones," not on them. Here Ibn Nagdela, Ibn Schaprut and Abarbanel loom prominent.

The literature, the production of which covers so much of this period, falls into two groups:—

(1) *A literature written around the Law,* consisting of Commentaries, Digests and Responsa. These form an unbroken chain of development in Jewish practice from the close of the Babylonian schools to the production of the Summary of the Asherides.

(2) *A Philosophy,* interpreted for the most part in terms of the prevailing Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian schools, yet with certain vital discriminations that make it a distinctively Jewish Theology. It synchronizes with the Scholasticism of the Church, which it greatly influ-

334543

enced. This Philosophy covers a wide range from the rationalism of Gersonides to the mysticism of Kabala.

Yet here and there these two streams merge. The Philosophy took the Bible as its starting point and objective, while some of the commentaries are philosophies.

Some men belong to both divisions, such as Saadyah; Maimonides gave us a "Second Law" as well as a "Guide to the Perplexed."

Between the two, *the poets* occupy a middle place; yet even these take God and the Law as their classic themes. Gabirol and Halevi were poet philosophers.

The Jewish litterateur wrote only for his own people, though occasionally reaching beyond the confines of Jewry. But the Jewish *trader* served an economic function for the world at large. Here he was the advance herald of commerce in an age of feudalism. He financed States and projects before the Italian banker appeared to give dignity to money-lending by the use of a new name.

But far more important than his place as middleman in the realm of industry was his place as middleman in the realm of letters. The Jewish linguists and translators brought Judaeo-Arabic science to the knowledge of Christian Europe, thus linking the races.

While the Hebrew and the Moslem lived together congenially and explored the realms of science hand in hand, by the Christian the Jews were rarely understood. Hence, their status in Christendom was a precarious one. They stood a helpless minority in a bigoted environment. At its best, theirs was a life of sufferance with its details of legal restrictions, taxes that were spoliations, and the humiliations of badge and ghetto. At its worst, it was a terrific tragedy, of which the

"Hep, Hep!" of the Crusaders was the first act, the Black Death and the Inquisition the second act, the massacres and the expulsions making the climax.

Yet, throughout, their patient faith never flagged. It is the most wondrous fact of it all. And it did seem as though Providence intervened to open to them havens of refuge in the darkest hours—in Moslem Spain in the eighth century of Visigothic persecution, in Poland in the eleventh century of Crusade ravage, and in Turkey in the fifteenth century, when monkish hostility was fast hemming them in and shutting all doors of escape.

In the whole survey of this stirring period we must recognize that while there were many martyrs there were some traitors. The latter, rather than the former, contribute the tragedy of Israel. Together they mark the conflict between the ideal and the sordid—a conflict that is going on still.

So the study of this epoch may help the Jew of to-day to see himself mirrored. It thus becomes a not unimportant element in his religious education.

This introduction should be read at the close as well as at the opening of this book, for it is a summary of its contents.

How To Use This Book

This volume continues unbrokenly the History of the Jews from the point at which it closed in "A Thousand Years of Jewish History." It is followed by a final volume, "Modern Jewish History," which brings the chronicle of Israel down to the present day.

The material in this volume falls into two divisions—history and literature. The pupils may find the history more interesting and certainly simpler; but the literature must not be neglected. The teacher should use his discretion in teaching or omitting the chapters dealing with philosophy; this will depend upon the age and intelligence of the pupils, for this volume has been purposely made rather full for a school manual. In this way, it offers the wise teacher greater liberty in selection.

It will be noticed how largely the Jews were involved in all great world movements and crises. It has, therefore, been found advisable to outline briefly certain events of general history in order to make clear the relation of the Jews to them; examples of these are: Feudalism, the Crusades, the power of the Pope, the rise of Poland. For the same reason the chronological tables throughout the book are placed in parallel columns, putting world events and Jewish events side by side.

The notes should not be neglected. The "Theme for Discussion" gives the gist of the chapter. It should be used as an opportunity for bringing out the views of the pupils.

Many cross references are interspersed throughout the book, not only to aid memory, but to compare like conditions in different eras, revealing the "repetition of history."

A copious Index will be found at the end of the book. Encourage the scholar to make use of it.

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GHETTO OF MARBURG

BOOK I. DECLINE OF THE EASTERN ACADEMIES.

CHAPTER I

CHARLEMAGNE AND HIS TIME.

This volume opens at the end of the eighth century. The centre of gravity of the Jews was still in the East; but their best work there was almost done. We see them joining the great human tide that was moving steadily westward.

The Spanish Peninsula was now largely Mohammedan. Under the sway of cultured and enlightened Moors (as the Mohammedans in Spain were called) that which had been to them a land of iron persecution became the centre of benevolent liberalism. We shall see how this favorable environment created a golden era for Israel. This volume will be largely concerned with their life and their literary achievements in Spain.

The rest of Europe was Christian or fast becoming so; for, when a monarch accepted the Cross, he also accepted it for his nation, and even imposed it upon the lands he conquered. These became Christian in name, though for a long time remaining pagan in fact.

As the lands around the Mediterranean were the earliest civilized and populated, they became the earliest of Jewish settlement. So we shall hear nothing of our brethren in Scandinavia in the whole period covered by this work and little of them in Northeastern Europe.

Life for the Jews was made tolerable but scarcely enjoyable among the Goths, Allemani and Lombards, who broke up the Western Roman Empire. But we shall witness further "breakings up" and re-arranging

of the map of Europe, until the different peoples come to group themselves into the European nations as we know them to-day.

The Franks.

Of all of these different tribes or races that drifted from the north and east, the most powerful were the Franks, already referred to in *T.Y.*, p. 288. But we must say a little more about them and their development, for they largely affected Jewish life. Under one of their kings, Clovis (456), their dominion steadily spread on both sides of the Rhine, covering pretty much of what is now France and Germany. By accepting Christianity in its orthodox or catholic form (*T. Y.*, p. 284), he received the support of its influential clergy, while the Vandals in Italy and the Ostragoths in Africa, espousing Arian Christianity (*T.Y.*, p. 243), that was accepted only by a small minority, were steadily losing ground.

The next great Frank was styled Martel, meaning "The Hammer," for a reason similar to that which earned this title for one of Israel's early Judges, *Gideon*, and one of their late leaders, Judas, the *Maccabee*. (Both these names mean "Hammer.") Charles Martel directed sledge hammer blows against the Arabs, checking their further advance at Poictiers; for it was considered a duty, both religious and patriotic, to drive back the "heathen," as most non-Christian peoples were styled.

Charlemagne.

But it is his grandson with whom we are concerned, Charlemagne. He pushed his conquests against Sax-

ons, Lombards and Huns, keeping the Moors beyond the Pyrenees. But he came down further and added Northern Italy to the Frankish Empire, crowning his son as King of Rome. So his empire extended from the Mediterranean to the North Sea. (See map in front). We shall see the tremendous consequence of this union of North and South Europe in many ways.

But Charlemagne was more than a great conqueror, he was a great man. He fully deserved this name, which means Charles the Great. He lines up with the few who have directed the world's destinies. He was broad minded and enlightened. In an age of despotism he recognized the civil rights of his subjects, and in an age of ignorance he raised their social status, promoting education, art, manufacture and commerce. A scholar himself, speaking Latin and Greek, he encouraged scholars to settle in his empire.

Is it surprising that under such a ruler the status of the Jews distinctly improved? He was too large a man to persecute them or even treat them contemptuously. A good Christian himself, and establishing bishoprics throughout his dominions, his policy towards them was entirely opposed to the restrictions of Church Councils. In the domain of commerce, for which circumstances best fitted the Jews (see *T. Y.*, p. 286), they were unhampered by bigoted restrictions, though a severe oath was imposed upon them in testifying against Christians. Greater freedom of travel being allowed them, they began to spread over Germany and to drift towards Eastern Europe. Charlemagne's Mohammedan contemporary, Haroun Al Raschid, best known to readers through "The Arabian Nights," sent ambassadors to pay him homage. He chose Isaac, a Jew, as one of an embassy to Al Raschid's court at Bagdad, entrusted

with secrets of State; his colleagues dying, Isaac returned as sole ambassador.

One of Charlemagne's requests to the Caliph in fact concerned the welfare of the Jews and illustrates again his sense of duty to further the higher welfare of all people under his sway. He asked for a learned Babylonian Jew to direct the religious and educational needs of the Jews of the Frankish Empire. So one Machir was sent, who became the head of the congregation and founder of the Academy of Narbonne. With the same purpose in view, he transplanted the learned Kalonymos family from Lucca to Mayence. For he sufficiently appreciated his Jewish subjects to wish them to have their sources of learning and authority within his own dominions, with a centre on each side of the Rhine.

Holy Roman Empire.

We will complete this general survey with that event in Charlemagne's career that marks the opening of a new epoch for Europe and that was to touch the Jew in unexpected ways. While he was worshipping in St. Peter's at Rome on Christmas, 800, Pope Leo III set a crown upon his head and declared him Carolus Augustus, Roman emperor.

What did it mean? It meant the revival of the defunct Roman Empire in name at least and made it the background and setting of the Roman Church—The *Holy* Roman Empire. While bringing no added provinces, the halo of the revived title brought tremendous prestige. As the old empire had come to represent almost the whole civilized world *politically,* so Christianity now claimed control of the world *spiritually.* The theory now was: One Church, one State, each

supporting the other. Mark, too, it was the Pope (*T. Y.* p. 285), who crowned the Emperor. This meant the Church's claim of superior sway. That claim was to make stirring doings in the centuries following.

So, by this adroit act of a far-seeing Pope, a new page in history began.

Eastern Roman Empire.

This "arrangement" did not include the eastern half of the Roman Empire—the Byzantine, with its capital at Constantinople; for, although it extended from Greece to Asia Minor, it was becoming more of a negligible quantity. It had steadily declined since the days of Justinian, who flourished in the sixth century (*T. Y. pp.* 281-2). It was not so successful as the Frankish Empire in keeping off the "infidel." It had not a Martel. So, in the seventh century the Mohammedans took from it Judea, Syria and Egypt. They were steadily creeping towards Constantinople.

In the eighth century, one of its Emperors, Leo, became known as "The Iconoclast," (image breaker), for he broke the images in the churches in answer to the taunt that he was an idolater by his Moslem enemies. He then persecuted the Hebrews in response to the cry that he had become a "Jew"—raised by his Christian friends, because forsooth he had treated them tolerantly! This meant for our ancestors exile or Christian disguise until the storm blew over. In 842 the Church Council at Nicæa reintroduced image worship, but did not abolish Jewish persecution. So Christianity was to continue for many centuries "a baptized paganism," as a Christian divine has styled it.

Byzantine Jews, though denied public office and other

privileges, were not disturbed in their occupations, of which the silk industry was chief.

Notes and References.

Passover and Easter.

It was at the different councils held at Nicæa that the doctrine of the Christian Church was gradually formulated, hence known as the "Nicene Creed."

At the first council, in 325, it was decided that the date for Easter should no longer be the first day of Passover—Nisan 15th—but should be chosen by a different calculation. This was one of many steps taken to widen the gulf between Judaism and Christianity.

See Bryce's *The Holy Roman Empire* for a picture of the complete evolution of Christian Rome from pagan Rome.

Theme for Discussion:

A critic has said that the Holy Roman Empire was neither holy, Roman nor an Empire. Analyze this criticism.

JEWISH COSTUMES OF THE MIDDLE AGES

CHAPTER II.

ISRAEL IN THE MOSLEM ORIENT.

Let us now turn from Europe to Asia. By the time Charlemagne was Emperor the Mohammedan faith had spread with great strides and already had Caliphates in three continents—at Bagdad, Cairo and Cordova. (Caliph means successor: "prince of the faithful" was another title given to the successors of Mahomet.) The Jews gladly settled under their sway, for they found that increase of power which made the Christian despotic left the Moslem tolerant. So Jerusalem, now under the rule of the Church, had a declining Jewish population of but mediocre learning, telling only of glory that had been.

Bagdad, on the Tigris, enlarged and beautified by Haroun Al Raschid, became a centre of commerce and learning and housed a thousand Jewish families, with a college; Aleppo in Syria had half as many again. The seat of old Babylonia, between the Euphrates and the Tigris, was their densest centre and the academies of Sora and Pumbeditha still had a couple more centuries of life—with the "Prince of the Exile" as much a grandee as ever. (*T. Y.*, pp. 231, 309). "Exile" was a general term for all those lands of sojourn in which Israel took refuge after they lost Judæa. Some of our brethren had drifted as far as India. (A small native group of black Jews, called Beni-Israel, are still found there).

Though the first Caliphs were somewhat masterful in forcing forward the new Faith they were, on the whole, both tolerant and broad. More than that, they were lovers of culture, and some were more deeply interested in Arabic poetry than in the Koran. They became patrons

of literature and helped to usher in a new era of scholarship and letters that may be compared with the Alexandrian era of Greek culture, some eight centuries earlier. As the Jew had contributed toward the former, so likewise he shared in the latter. Arabic became what Greek had been then—the language of learning and culture. Now studied by the Jew, it was later to bear fruit in a splendid Arabic-Jewish literature.

Revival of Hebrew Poetry.

This favorable environment also brought about a renaissance of Hebrew. A school of Jewish poetry sprung up once more. Israel was again to take up the lyre that he had disconsolately hung on the willows of Babylon. The poetry that began to flow from Jewish pens still made religion its main theme: "I will sing *unto the Lord* as long as I live." Much of this poetry was of a liturgical character, that is, it went to enrich the service of the synagogue. They wrote particularly for the Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur service. These solemn days offered opportunities for a grand survey of Israel's past and for hopeful visions of God's enduring providence. We might say that the Jews contributed poetry to the divine service as enthusiastically as Christian artists painted the "holy family."

Kalir.

The most prolific writer of liturgical poetry was Kalir of Palestine. There still exist over two hundred of his poems in festival prayer-books and in chants for fast and penitential days. The *Midrashim* furnished much of the material not only for his prayers, but also for his acrostics and his riddles. (Midrash was the ex-

pounding of the Scriptures in a homiletic way.) But Kalir was only an advance herald of greater poets to come.

With the steady additions of poems of this and later days, the Jewish Liturgy not only became amplified, but the earlier simple prayer-book grew into a very complex ritual. The rhymed acrostics and metrical compositions—*piyutim* as they were called—lacked both the grandeur and the simplicity of the Psalms. They failed to quicken the spirit of worship. Ingenious and artificial twists impede devotion. The tendency today has been to simplify the Ritual by omitting them.

Prayer in Song.

These metrical prayers gradually fostered a custom that has taken deep root in the Jewish service. The prayers were *chanted,* so that musical rendition came to be a dominant feature. Music, it is true, ever since the days of the Second Temple and before, was an integral part of Jewish worship. Two hundred singers returned from Babylon to sing again the songs of Zion The Psalms are grouped as song services. Yet this was something very different from the chanting of these later days. The *Chazan* was an overseer who at first fulfilled humble duties for the Synagogue and the community; but later he recited the prayers. Still later he chanted them and was styled a "cantor." This cantellation was called *Chazanuth* after his original title, *Chazan.* For the sake of a melodious voice many faults of character were overlooked. This was detrimental to the influence this office should wield. Occasionally, too, the cantor would introduce melodies from sources not in high esteem.

Let us hasten to add, this by no means characterized all the Chazanim of the olden time. Some wrote the Piyutim they intoned. Some were learned in the Law. At his best, the Chazan was styled "the messenger of the congregation," who had to wrestle in prayer on its behalf.

We will close this chapter with Alice Lucas' translation of one of Kalir's poems:

PALMS AND MYRTLES.

(*Hymn for the first day of Tabernacles.*)

Thy praise, O Lord, will I proclaim
In hymns unto Thy glorious name.
O Thou Redeemer, Lord and King,
Redemption to thy faithful bring!
Before Thine altar they rejoice
With branch of palm, and myrtle-stem,
To Thee they raise the prayerful voice—
Have mercy, save and prosper them.

May'st Thou in mercy manifold,
Dear unto Thee Thy people hold,
When at Thy gate they bend the knee,
And worship and acknowledge Thee:
Do Thou their heart's desire fulfill,
Rejoice with them in love this day,
Forgive their sins and thoughts of ill,
And their transgressions cast away.

They overflow with prayer and praise
To Him, who knows the future days.
Have mercy Thou, and hear the prayer
Of those who palms and myrtle bear.
Thee, day and night they sanctify
And in perpetual song adore,
Like to the heavenly host, they cry:
"Blessed art Thou for evermore."

We shall see presently that the great poetry of Israel was not produced in Asia, but in Europe, where their life interest was gradually centering.

Notes and References.

Piyutim.

José ben José of Palestine was one of the earliest of this school of liturgical poets, taking us back to the sixth century. That Passover Hagada poem, "And It Happened in the Middle of the Night," is ascribed to him.

The ritual chant is much older than what are called the traditional melodies, which are German.

A favorite theme of early Jewish poets was the 613 precepts, alphabetically arranged.

See Zunz in his *Literatur Geschichte der Synogagalen Poesie,* pp. 29-64.

Kalir.

The involved Piyutim of Kalir are found in the Ashkenaz (German) ritual; the simpler Spanish Piyutim are found mostly in the Sephardic ritual.

See prayer book for New Year and Atonement, for which special translations have been made, published by the Routledge Co., London. Those Reform communities that no longer use the orthodox ritual for worship should still use it for study.

A Hebrew Josephus.

To this period, about 940, also belongs a rather inferior summary of Jewish history, from the Exile to the Temple's fall. Largely based on Josephus, the Apocrypha and other works in Greek, it was later translated from the Arabic into Hebrew and expanded. It was styled *Josippon.* It is rather a pity that the Jews studied it to the neglect of its more historic prototype. Christian Europe read it, too.

Theme for Discussion:

The function of music in religion.

CHAPTER III.

THE KARAITES.

Back to the Scriptures.

Now that the Talmud was a finished product, the generation of scholars succeeding its editors, called *Geonim* (Excellencies), had not the authority to modify its laws; they could only explain them. These laws had become very voluminous. While the bulk of Jewry yielded faithful obedience to rabbinic precept, there appeared a protesting few. There always had been—since the days of the Sadducees. (*T. Y.*, p. 79). Many chafed against the complicated and minute behests of the Talmud. In the eighth century the cry arose, "Back to the Scriptures," and to its few and simple commands; and it would not be downed. We shall see this demand now develop into a religious party styled Karaites, that is Scripturalists, which exercised a deep influence on Judaism and which survives as a small sect to this day.

How the Movement Arose.

In studying a movement it is always well to distinguish between the general cause and the immediate occasion. The general cause for the Karaitic movement lay in the fact that there grew up many independent thinkers who would not yield blind obedience to ancient authority. They wanted to sift the evidence anew for themselves as to the reasonableness and validity of accepted beliefs and observances. Such natures are the progressives, sometimes styled liberals, sometimes radicals. They appear in nearly all ages and in nearly all religions. The existence of such persons within the fold of Judaism

was bound eventually to lead to a protest of some kind. It did now. It seemed to these critics that the original laws of the Bible had become lost or obscured in the minute rabbinic rites and forms indirectly deduced from them. Rabbinism had over-reached itself. The time was ripe and the conditions complete for a change. It awaited but the incident to organize them into action. What was the immediate occasion?

Anan.

In 762 the Resh Galutha (chief of the exile), or to give him his secular title, the Exilarch, died without issue. As it had become a hereditary office since the time of Bostani (640), the position should have gone to the next of kin, the late prince's nephew, Anan. But the heads of the two academies, Sora and Pumbeditha, in whom the power of appointment lay, passed Anan by and installed his younger brother in office.

Conflict arose, and a party rallied around Anan, who left Babylonia and settled in Jerusalem. He had also been of that liberal class that chafed against the old Rabbinical code of laws explained above. Perhaps this was the cause of his rejection. In any event the treatment intensified his anti-Talmudic tendency, for beliefs are often affected by events.

He now started a new movement in Judaism embodying the idea of rejection of all post-biblical laws. The programme sounded attractive. So was the man. Many flocked to his standard. With the watchword "Back to Scripture,"—all later law, contained in Mishna and Gemara, the developed product of ages, was rejected at one fell swoop. Henceforward they were to accept as their religious authority only the text of the Bible, or rather of the Mosaic Law—*Mikra*—from *Kara* to read—hence the name later acquired by the new sect, *Karaites*.

Now one reason why the rabbis had added so many rules to those in the Bible, though derived from them, was to meet the growing needs of practical life. Naturally the Bible did not contain the detail regulations to satisfy the changing wants of every age. This the Karaites all too soon discovered. Though they abandoned these rabbinic institutes and went back to the Bible, they also did not find it contained sufficient regulations to cover all needs. They had, therefore, to resort to the very same procedure of deducing new law from the Scripture, which they had condemned in the Rabbanite. Their means of evolving such laws from the Bible were just as arbitrary and later grew just as burdensome as those they rejected. In fact, they adopted the same general rules of interpretation found in the Mishna. Even so, it was not possible to reject every post-biblical law.

The Mistakes of Karaism.

Here are some of the regulations of this new school of Judaism. The fixed Calendar of Hillel II drawn up in the year 359 (*T. Y.*, pp. 186, 234, 243) was rejected and resort was once more made to the more primitive method of observing the seasons by direct observation of the phases of the moon—a retrogressive step. If the rabbinic Sabbath laws had been strict, those of the Karaites were still more severe. The sick must not receive their medicine; the people must not leave their homes (unless they lived as a separate community); the food must not be warmed, nor a fire kindled, even by a non-Jew, on the holy Sabbath day.

The degrees of relationship within which marriage was prohibited were extended beyond biblical and Talmudic

law, to include uncle and niece and the step-children of different parents.

It is always easier to diagnose a disease than to find a remedy. We must not be surprised then that in their rejection or modification of some Jewish practices, Anan and his followers showed very unequal judgment. Their laying aside the *Tephillin* (phylacteries) may have been in the interest of the metaphoric and spiritual interpretation of the precepts to "bind them upon the hand and make them as a memorial before the eyes." We can understand, too, the compilation of a prayer-book made up wholly of biblical selections. But what shall we say of the striking from the calendar of the Feast of Hanukkah because it was instituted in post-biblical times! On the other hand, we are glad to record that females inherited equally with males, where Karaite civil law held sway.

The fatal mistake of Anan is that he did a right thing in a wrong way. He found that the simplicity and grandeur of the Scripture had been marred and that the tendency of the Talmudic system was towards dry legalism and trifling minutiæ. In founding a new school to correct abuses that always cluster around institutions in process of time, his duty was to *revise* rabbinic law, not to abandon it altogether. In lacking this power of discrimination, he missed his opportunity. Ruthlessly to cast aside with the undesirable so many rites, endeared by long sanction, and many others wise and worthy in themselves, was to invite opposition and to court unpopularity. The *movement* may then be said to have suffered from the limitations of the *man*. When we have said that he was not a religious genius, we have almost said everything. But that the movement survived the man

(though it ceased to bear his name) may be regarded as some testimony of greatness.

The Improvements of Karaism.

The Karaites took an enlightened attitude towards other religions. They acknowledged the greatness of both Jesus and Mahomet and recognized that Islam and Christianity both had messages for the world.

The early Karaites practised rigid self-denial; asceticism is a not unusual characteristic of new sects in the first stage of enthusiasm. This moderated with time. So did their extreme radicalism, with which they began.

For a long time great bitterness prevailed between the Karaites and the Rabbanites, the latter comprising the bulk of Israel. Anan became a rival Resh Gelutha. On the one side, Karaites were excommunicated, and they in their turn would not eat or intermarry with the conservatives.

The great and lasting service rendered to the cause of Judaism by the Karaites, for which we are even still grateful, was the new impetus given to Bible study. For, as all law had to be deduced from the Scriptures anew, it involved a thorough scrutiny of its text, This meant, too, a more scientific knowledge of Hebrew grammar than had hitherto prevailed. This gave birth to a new literature on the Bible. Scripture commentaries were written not only by the Karaites but, in emulation, by the Rabbanites also. For, to maintain the validity of their Talmudic laws, which the Karaites criticised, it became necessary also to trace their roots to the Law of Moses. But, for many years, the preponderance of scholarship was on the Karaite side.

It was just the period, too, when Arabic learning was ripening to its best. So Jewish scholarship now received

a double incentive, from Hebrew learning within and from Arabic culture without.

With its centre at Jerusalem, Karaism steadily spread, reaching Babylonia, Egypt, the Crimea and, later, Spain. Its zealous disciples made earnest propaganda in its cause.

Notes and References.

Karaism.

Some Karaites went so far as to allow to each the right of individual interpretation. This occasionally led to confusion, to the forming of sects within the sect—each with its separate regulations. Something of the same character occurred and with the same consequences when the Protestant Reformation took place in the Church in the sixteenth century.

For some famous Karaite scholars and the propaganda they made for the cause, see *Jewish Literature,* Abrahams, pp. 76-82.

Sunnites and Shiites among Mohammedans correspond respectively to Rabbanites and Karaites among the Jews.

The Calendar.

Hillel II. is said to have been the man who equalized the lunar and solar year by the addition of a month (2nd Adar) seven times in each nineteen years.

Karaites and the Messiah.

On one or two occasions anti-Talmudic movements were heralded by self-styled Messiahs—deluded enthusiasts who thought that the time had arrived to lead their people back to the Holy Land—and that they were the chosen instruments of the divine will. One such appeared in Syria about 720, and another in Ispahan about 760.

But Messiah uprisings due to local persecution were only accidental associations of anti-Talmudic movements—not their legitimate outcome. On the contrary, the opponents of rabbinic rule were mostly the ration-

alists among the Jews, the last to be carried away by mystic dreams.

Sahal.

One of these Karaites of the tenth century was the zealous Sahal of Jerusalem. He compiled a Bible commentary, a Hebrew grammar and a manual of religious observance. He tried hard to win the Rabbanites over to the Karaite fold. Very severe was he in denunciation of prevailing superstitions, such as invoking departed spirits and making vows to cure disease. This gives us an insight into the credulity of those days.

Rivalry of the Two Schools.

A curious polemic comes down to us from the year 1346 of the distinctions between Karaism and Rabbinism as enumerated by the former:

"First: *They* maintain that there were several enactments really communicated to Moses. *We* do not believe that there was any commandment orally communicated, which is not written in the Book of the Law.

"Second: *They* maintain that whatever is written in the Law requires an interpretation according to the said tradition. *We,* the true sages, have turned from this slippery path of tradition and closely kept to the safe road of Scripture.

"Third: *They* maintain that the Law itself permits them to add to the precepts and enactments of the written Law; but *we,* who fear the Lord and tremble at His word, we men of justice, have seen that nothing is a greater stumbling-block to Israel than the invention of the second law."

From *The Hebrew Review,* Zedner, London, 1860.

Theme for Discussion:

The likeness and difference between Sadducees and Karaites.

CHAPTER IV.

SAADYAH GAON AND THE TWO ACADEMIES.

When Haroun Al Raschid died in 809 the Mohammedans, hitherto so tolerant to the Jews, were stirred by a wave of fanaticism against them. (Israel was to find in its checkered career that that the liberal has intolerant lapses sometimes, and, thank God, the bigot has occasionally benignant inspirations.) So we must not be surprised to see the Resh Gelutha, the head of Jewish affairs in the East, shorn of his power and the Jews made to wear badges in invidious distinction from the Moslem.

Jewish Scholarship.

But it was only a passing storm. Tolerant sunshine was the normal atmosphere under Moslem sway, and it brought its usual accompaniment of culture. Emulating the Mohammedan scholars who were translating Greek classics into Arabic, the Jewish scholars began to win laurels in the fields of medicine, astronomy and mathematics. Just as it was the Karaites, who were most active in natural science, so it was the Moslem rationalists—whom the orthodox called Mutazalists (heretics)—who were the more scholarly.

These Jewish and Moslem rationalists tried to make clear the spiritual nature of God. Emphasis on divine spirituality was certainly needed among the less intelligent both of Mohammedans and Jews, all too prone to depict God in a material way. Sometimes even in the great academies of Sora and Pumbeditha, both of which had flourished since the third century, teachers were not wanting who represented divinity somewhat crudely. God

was sometimes spoken of in a rather naive way in many a Midrashic story. The mistake only lay in those who could not discern the playful touch and interpreted the picture too literally.

The Geonim.

About the middle of the ninth century, the school of Sora, which had so far held preeminence, declined in prestige. Pumbeditha now loomed prominent, possibly in consequence of its nearness to Bagdad. Its head was also given the title of *Gaon* (Excellency), and it became independent of the Exilarch. Both schools now shared equally the revenues sent for their maintenance by Israel at large.

The Geonim were now the spirited leaders of the Jews. What were their chief duties? First and chiefly the exposition of Talmudic law, solving the religious questions of the people: Secondly, they played a large part in regulating the secular affairs of the community touching trade, agriculture, landed property, lawsuits and application of Bible laws to the usages of their neighbors. For the Jews were left largely to manage their own affairs, that is, they were granted a kind of local self-government. Again, they were litterateurs, writing treatises on Talmudic themes. One compiled a Talmud dictionary, another a Jewish book of worship, yet another wrote a treatise on the Calendar.

About the year 750 a Compendium of Jewish Law was put forth by Judah, the blind Gaon of Sora, and another was written about 900 in emulation of the activity of the Karaites and in contradistinction to *their* codes of law. The times also produced a history in Arabic of the Second Temple epoch. Spurred on by Karaite rivalry, the

schools now devoted themselves to the study of biblical exegesis, Hebrew grammar and even natural science, to which they had been somewhat averse.

This period of intellectual awakening now produced a great scholar—the herald of a series of Jewish philosophers that were to bring light into the Dark Ages—Saadyah.

Judaism had produced no great philosopher since Philo. (*T. Y.* chap. xvii.) Its thinkers had devoted their energy not to theology but to law. Of Talmudic thinkers who have transmitted to us fine bits of wisdom—Rabbi Joshua, Resh Lakish, Mar Samuel and others—we are hardly told enough to classify them as philosophers. But beginning with Saadyah, the Jews were now to produce in the coming centuries—not one system of philosophy that we can specifically term "the Jewish"—but a series of individual philosophers, expounders of every school in the light of Jewish belief, and contributing valuable and corrective data to every phase of speculative thought.

Saadyah Gaon.

Saadyah was born in Upper Egypt, in the year 892. Although he received a broad and scientific education, he nevertheless became a vigorous opponent of the Karaites. Because of his fine scholarship he was able to meet them on their own ground, and they found in him an opponent worthy of their steel. Following their example he also produced a Hebrew dictionary and a Hebrew grammar, and devoted himself early to biblical exposition. He translated nearly the whole Bible into Arabic and added popular notes. Like the Septuagint to the Greeks, it served to acquaint the Arabian with the Bible. Then, too, Arabic had become the vernacular for Jews in

Moslem lands. This meant their introduction to Arabic literature. The next step was to be the fusing of Arabic and Jewish culture. The same sequence had occurred about a thousand years earlier among Greek speaking Jews of Alexandria.

Saadyah was entirely with the Karaites in discouraging prevailing crude notions of divinity. But he vigorously condemned their rejection of Talmudic law. His controversies with this new school, which form a large part of his writings, helped to clarify his opinions and at the same time to bring him to the notice of the Jewish world at large. His fame spread from Egypt to Babylonia. So, although not educated in its schools, and although some resented his study of science and philosophy, it was decided against all precedents, to call him to the Gaonate of Sora. It was hoped that this great scholar might revive its waning fame. So in 928 he became Saadyah-*Gaon*.

His learning, his breadth of view and his winning personality attracted many students to his lecture room. He at once set to work to reform abuses that had crept into the life of the Babylonian Jews in general and in the high office of Exilarch (Resh Gelutha) in particular. This won him many enemies already jealous of the foreigner given chief place in one of their Academies.

Refusing to sanction an unjust decision in favor of a corrupt Exilarch named David and into which dispute even the reigning Caliph was drawn, his integrity lost him his Gaonate. He believed that it was better to be right than Gaon.

But the gloomy outlook that such conditions indicated made him despondent and somewhat affected his health.

Nevertheless, he made his retirement his period of greatest literary activity. Prayers, poems, articles on

Talmudic law, Responsa (answers to religious queries) and a treatise on the Commandments now came from his prolific pen.

Faith and Creed.

But his great work was a philosophy of Religion—written in Arabic, but best known through its translated Hebrew title *Emunoth v'Daioth* (Faith and Creed).

In this work in which he was unconsciously influenced by Moslem thinkers of his day, he endeavored to answer the needs of two classes—the ignorant, who shrunk from philosophic learning and whose faith was blind, and the extreme rationalists whose faith was doubtful. He desired to harmonize Philosophy and Faith, a meritorious aim that many great thinkers since his day have tried to realize.

He treats here of all themes of religious concern—God, Creation, Revelation, the Soul, Human Obligation, Death, Resurrection, Retribution and the Messiah.

Here and there he criticises the diverging points of view of Church and Mosque on these doctrines. He criticises the Christian theory of the Messiah and the Moslem authority of "The Prophet." He upholds the unity of God taught by Judaism as against Persian Dualism and Christian Trinity. He refutes Paul's justification for abandoning the Jewish Law (*T. Y.*, p. 133) and shows that its commands are imposed that we may attain the highest blessing. He tries to reconcile man's free will with God's omniscience and the suffering of the righteous with His justice. How many before and since have sought to answer these profound problems of life!

His opinions are strictly conservative though rationally presented. He defends the traditional belief of "cre-

ation out of nothing" (creatio ex nihilo), which we will hear of again, and the resurrection of the body. He does not question divine revelation according to the literal word of the Bible. He accepts Bible miracles, in fact he regards them as proof of its authority. Yet in his day very few rationalists doubted the authenticity of the Scriptures, though not always accepting the authority of the Talmud.

Altogether, we may say he revived Rabbinism and checked the spread of Karaism; whether it was for evil or for good it is hard to say. Thus we see that neither in the Synagogue nor in the Church of a few centuries earlier, had a rationalistic movement succeeded in displacing the prevailing orthodoxy.

Saadyah was finally restored to the Gaonate in 937; so justice triumphed in the end. He generously befriended the son and grandson of his old enemy the Exilarch David, with whom he had become reconciled. But he did not live long to enjoy his new honors. At the age of fifty he closed his brilliant career. The school of Sora that had shown new signs of life during his energetic rule closed its doors in 948, six years after his death.

Closing of the Eastern Academies.

The Exilarchate that had also been steadily declining was allowed to lapse altogether during a passing wave of intolerance in the year 940, after existing seven hundred years.

Pumbeditha had a sligthly longer lease of life through the energy of two famous Gaonim, Sherira and his son Hai. To Sherira we owe a history of the Jewish community in letter form from the close of the Talmud to

his own day—i. e., from about 500 A. C. E. almost to the year 1000.

Hai Gaon was far the greater man, both in character and thought. He was not ashamed to learn from both Christian and Mohammedan. In certain Talmudic fields he remained the authority for later generations. He was clear minded enough to condemn the superstitious magic supposed to be evoked by utterance of the tetragrammaton (four lettered name of God, יהוה).

Scholars in different lands gladly sought his counsel. With his death in 1038 we may say the school of Pumbeditha also came to an end and with it an epoch in Judaism.

As the center of Judaism had shifted from Palestine to Babylonia with the decline of the Patriarchate, so now with the extinction of the Exilarchate, a new center of Jewish activity emerges. This time, no longer in Asia, but in Europe, for the Jew was gradually changing his continental home.

Notes and References.

Responsa.

Responsum (an answer), Hebrew *She'elot u-Teshubot,* i.e. Questions and Answers. These consist of decisions on Jewish law issued from time to time by eminent rabbis and teachers of authority in answer to written questions from communities or individuals. Some of the questions were on theoretical knowledge in relation to Jewish belief, but most concerned practical life, touching conditions that arose in Israel's varied experiences for which answers could not always be found in Bible, Talmud or Jewish codes of law. Many of them throw light on the times in which they were written and, therefore, supply valuable information on the history of the Jews and on their moral and social relations. These Answers, of

which there are several hundred thousand, cover a period of 1700 years.

Kalam.

The Moslem rationalists—whom the orthodox called Mutazalists (heretics) were noted for scholarship. They developed a religious philosophy styled Kalam. They paraphrased their Koran much as the Alexandrian Jews had allegorized the Jewish Scripture. They may have indirectly given impetus to the Karaite movement.

Thought repeats itself as well as history. In the Alexandrian school, Philo (*T. Y.*, p. 143) touched by Greek influence, depicted God as the absolutely perfect, devoid of all limiting qualities and having no contact with matter. The Moslem rationalists now depicted God in the same abstract way. Just as Philo and his school endeavored to read Greek philosophy into Jewish Scripture by explaining its laws and language allegorically, so the Mutazalists interpreted the Koran, and like them, too, treated every anthropomorphism as a metaphor. Like them the Karaite philosophers likewise depicted God in a more exalted and rarified way—spiritually aloof, so to speak—unaware that they were following the precedent of their own ancestors rather than their Moslem contemporaries.

Genizah.

This Hebrew word means hiding place. It is a synagogue store room in which worn out Hebrew books and papers were preserved. In this way many lost manuscripts have come to light, rewarding the patient search of the scholars. *Saadyana* is the name given to such a collection edited by Solomon Schechter (Cambridge, 1913). It contains fragments of writings of R. Saadyah Gaon and others. Some of the contents are fragments of lost books.

Saadyah.

Seeing that the "Sepher Yetzirah," a mystical work

on the Creation, tended to encourage the superstitions of its less thoughtful readers, he rationalized the work for popular usage.

There is a very informing article on "The Life and Works of Saadyah," by Dr. M. Friedlander, in the 5th volume of the *Jewish Quarterly Review.*

For those who would penetrate further into the niceties of biblical exposition, the reader is referred to vols. x and xiii, of *Jewish Quarterly Review* for articles on "Anti-Karaite Writings of Saadyah Gaon."

Theme for Discussion:

Was it altogether in the interest of the Jewish cause that the spread of Karaism was checked through the vigor of Saadyah?

CHAPTER V.

CHAZARS—THE PROSELYTE KINGDOM

In what is now Russia and the adjacent principalities, Jews had been settled since the beginning of the Christian Era; but the wave of persecution in the Byzantine Empire in the eighth century brought a larger influx of Jews into this territory. Here were settled half-civilized groups of many allied races, among them Scythians, Finns, Bulgarians and—*Chazars*.

The Chazars, a people of Turkish origin, had established themselves by the seventh century between the Black and Caspian Seas, on the borders of two continents. The steady advance of their conquering arms brought terror to the Persians in Asia and won an alliance with the Byzantine Empire in Europe.

The Jews settled among them displayed superior industry and intelligence. These qualities began to tell, and the Chazars came to look up to them with something of the same respect with which the Arabians had regarded the Jews, settled among them in the pre-Mohammedan days (*T. Y.*, p. 295).

How the Chazars Became Jews.

The religion of the Chazars had so far been like that of their neighbors—a strange mixture of idolatrous notions and superstitions. But they now came to learn of Judaism from these Jewish settlers and visiting merchants, and of Mohammedanism and Christianity from Arabians and Greeks. Of these three religions, it was the Mosaic Faith that awakened in them a responsive chord. They seemed to find in this creed that which best appealed to their convictions and awakened the noblest

in them. So the Chazars embraced Judaism! This happened about the year 800.

A romantic story runs, that invited representatives of Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism presented their respective claims in a public religious disputation. The presiding king, Bulan, noticed, however, that both the Cross and the Crescent placed Judaism as the foundation of their respective creeds—and always referred to it as their standard and starting point. This unconscious and unintended tribute to the authority of the Mosaic faith helped to decide the royal choice. In a later chapter (x) we shall show how one of our philosophers used this incident to present a comparison between Judaism and other creeds. His work popularized the story. Bulan's example was followed by the nobles and eventually to a very great extent by the people at large. The law decided that henceforth the monarch must be a Jew, though religious liberty was granted to all.

The next king, Obadiah, enthusiastic in the cause of Judaism, invited Jewish sages to his kingdom to establish synagogues and schools. In this way the people were instructed in the Bible, Talmud and in Jewish observances.

Influence of Judaism.

The new religion brought as great a moral change in character as Philo tells us took place among the Greek and Roman proselytes to Judaism of his day. The barbaric practice of selling children as slaves was at once abandoned. Though still a nomadic people, living in barbaric surroundings, they established a civilized government with courts of justice, and maintained extensive trade. In a fanatic era their sway was tolerant and broad and the land became even a haven for the persecuted.

When at the height of his power, the king, or *chaghan* as he was called, even took means to defend Jews persecuted in other lands.

For many years the community remained unknown to the rest of the House of Israel. But about the year 960 the news of the proselyte kingdom was brought to Chasdai Ibn Nagdela in Spain, of whom we shall hear later. He at once entered in correspondence with Joseph, its eleventh Jewish king. He made thorough enquiry as to its geographical location, its past history, its customs, its internal constitution and the occupations of its people. It is to the correspondence that followed that we are indebted for most of what we know of the Jewish Chazar community.

Decline of the Chazars.

In the tenth century its fortunes began to decline. Its outlying provinces were seized by the rising power of Russia. But the Byzantines still regarded them with respect and fear. The Russian incursions continued to absorb more of their territory and soon they held naught but the Crimea. This was at length absorbed, too, by the steadily advancing Russians in 1016. Some commingled with other Jews settled there and the royalty took refuge in Spain.

Like the Jewish proselyte kingdom established by Jussuf in Arabia in the sixth century, it was not destined to endure (*T. Y.*, p. 296). Before the year 1100 the Jewish kingdom of the Chazars had vanished as a dream. But who shall say how far the Jewish influence may have been carried among the scattered people?

Theme for Discussion:

Why have proselyte Jewish kingdoms not been successful?

CHAPTER VI.

A "LIGHT" IN LANDS OF EXILE.

The Feudal System and the Jews.

European society was arranged on the plan of the feudal system (feud, fief—an estate). That is, the lands were parcelled out among the lords, who held them in tenure to the king. The peasantry in turn were vassals of the lords, lived on their land and paid them in kind from the produce. In time of war the king summoned his lords, and the lords their vassals. Many of these humble tenants were serfs, bound to the soil on which they toiled.

What place had the Jews in this regime? Strictly speaking, none. They were almost regarded as intruders, granted sufferance for the convenience of trade. The king usually took them under his protection, and, indifferent though it was, he taxed them for it roundly.

Not granted the privilege of carrying arms—for warfare was the daily occupation of a "gentleman"—they directed their attention to commerce and industry. In this way they served a useful function and became a monied class. We shall see how this general status could change from an undisturbed security—in which quiet joys may not have been lacking—to a state of tension and peril in which a doubtful safety was only reached by hurried flight.

End of Frankish Empire.

In our opening chapter we saw the renowned Charlemagne bringing most of the European races under his

sway. But the mantle of his greatness did not fall upon the shoulders of his successor, his son, Louis. Like the Greek Alexander, Charlemagne had the genius to found a vast empire, but not the power to assure it to posterity. Louis was fairly styled "The Gentle" (pious); but sterner qualities were needed to hold all the Carlovingian Empire in control. Torn between rebellious sons on the one hand and a scheming clergy on the other, his dominions at his death broke up and split into three kingdoms. A treaty was enacted at Verdun in 843 and its outcome was an eastern and western Frankish Empire; these were really the beginnings of the French and German nations.

But with almost each new monarch, in those days of conflict, national boundaries changed. Sometimes Italy was held and sometimes lost; but in the year 888, on the death of Charles the Fat, the Carlovingian Empire (as the Frankish was called, after Charle-magne), came to an end.

Then there was a second influx of barbarians. Those of the fifth century had consisted of Huns, Goths and Vandals and had broken up the Western Roman Empire. This second invasion consisted of Danes and Norse from the north, Saracens from the south, and Hungarians from the east. They undid much of Charlemagne's good work of establishing law and order. Many of the races he had subjected—such as Wends and Czechs—broke away and a period of misrule followed.

So the social status in this time of turmoil was low indeed. The strong grew rich and menacingly powerful; the poor became enslaved. In Italy all sorts of adventurers seized and disgraced the office of Pope, and violence and immorality were rife.

Not till the middle of the next century did Otto the Great, a man of something of the vigor of Charlemagne,

recover Italy and bring the people within his dominions into something like order again.

Like his illustrious predecessor, he, too, assumed the imperial title and again we hear of the "Holy Roman Empire." This meant Germany and Italy. The people continued to delude themselves into the belief that the Roman Empire continued to exist by setting up this empty title. From the capital Aix-la-Chapelle to the capital Rome was a long journey for German kings to take, for this phantom honor. Better would it have been for Germany had its kings stayed at home to strengthen their legitimate domain than to dissipate their energies in pursuing sham glories. But "Roman Empire" was a term to conjure with. This notion of one sole sovereignty helped to sustain the idea of one sole Church, as already explained. A world-empire, material and religious, became a kind of doctrine. It made the pope, too, as head of the Church, a species of spiritual emperor—which carried with it immense power and vast sway. But, in the hands of unscrupulous men, it often brought demoralization and disaster.

Jews Under Charlemagne's Successors.

In this setting how fared Israel under Charlemagne's successors? Louis, his eldest son, whose sway was chiefly exercised in the French portion of his empire, certainly earned his title of gentle, in his treatment of Israel. His reign with that of his father form one of the bright spots in mediæval Jewish annals. He gave the Jews freedom of movement and of worship, protection against bigoted clergy, appointing a special *Magister Judaeorum* (head of the Jews) for the consideration of their secular and reli-

gious needs. As examples of his beneficence he gave them jurisdiction over their own offenders, and he changed the market day from Saturday to Sunday. His kindly treatment was more than seconded by his queen, Judith, who did not merely tolerate Judaism but favored it. Naturally the example of the court was followed by the courtiers, who even began to show partiality for Jewish worship and preaching, while abbots sat at the feet of Jewish scholars. One bishop, Bodo, repelled by the immoralities of the clergy, became a proselyte to Judaism. With the zeal of a convert, he left "country, kindred and father's home" for the sake of his new faith.

This remarkable friendliness, in contrast with the more usual antagonism, brings out two opposing attitudes of Christians towards the Jews. By some they were regarded as the chosen people of God and as such to be venerated; by others, they were looked upon as outcasts of God and as such to be condemned. King Louis' brief day represented the former. Too soon and all too long were the Jews to experience the latter. Alas, it grew to be the normal status. Already in Louis' reign the higher clergy—always less tolerant than the lower—began to look with alarm at this drift towards Judaism. Agobard, bishop of Lyons, attacked them persistently and relentlessly and even joined the rebellion of Louis' sons because of their father's "criminal" kindness to the Jews. He tried to revive all those cruel Church laws which had made life so bitter in early Spain (*T. Y.*, p. 290-1). Owing to the opposition of the king, he failed. With a persistence worthy of a better cause he wrote bitter letters to his bishops urging them to endorse his bigotry. But Louis turned a deaf ear to their united appeal.

But Amolo, who succeeded Agobard, not only in the

bishopric of Lyons, but also in antagonism to the Jews, continued the vendetta of hate. A council was called at Meaux in 849 at which it was proposed to reinstitute all anti-Jewish laws of previous councils; but Charles the Bald, the next king, was as unwilling as his father to countenance anti-Jewish legislation.

Amolo, again following his master's example, issued a slanderous letter against the Jews to all the clergy of France. While affecting no change at first, the persistent virulence gradually told. The clergy began preaching anti-Jewish sermons, which naturally led to anti-Jewish riots. The sermon and the riot became an annual Easter institution—accompanied in Toulouse by a box on the ear of a representative of the Jewish community—an official humiliation.

"Selling Jews."

Yes, Jews of the Frankish Empire, were soon to learn that their tolerant days were over. All the indignities of early Spain were now introduced into France. In the year 914, Charles the Simple, Charles the Bald's successor, even handed over the lands of the Jews of Narbonne to the Church—on the inference, more menacing than the act, that the Jews were the *property* of the emperor.

"Selling Jews" was to become a profitable business of kings. This royal asset could often be transferred and it carried with it the right of taxation. Otto II "presented" the Jews of Merseburg to the local bishops. However wantonly they may have been fleeced with each change, the injury to their dignity in this humiliating treatment as chattels was their gravest and most enduring loss.

Rabenu Gershom.

So far their external condition. But internally the Jews had always lived in a world of their own—"the Law," in which they could occasionally forget the hard world without. So here in "lands of exile," as they termed all territory outside of Judæa, we shall see them creating a Jewish atmosphere around them, with the synagogue as their social as well as their religious focus.

A great man now loomed up in this world of the Law, Rabenu Gershom. Trained perhaps in the Narbonne school established by Charlemagne, he left France and settled in Germany. We may call him the founder of Talmudic study in both those lands.

As scholar first, he opened a Jewish academy in Mayence that drew students from many lands. All reverently looked up to this teacher as their religious authority; he not only revised the text of the Talmud, but his explanations became a popular commentary.

The custom has already been referred to for different communities to send their religious and communal questions for solution to renowned rabbis. Their answers, *Responsa* (note, p. 43), were accepted as addenda to Talmudic law. Many came from his pen. No longer was it necessary to send to the East for religious guidance and information. France, Germany and Italy became independent of the fast-dying Babylonia. We shall see Spain following their example.

A Jewish Synod.

But Gershom did not earn his title, "Light of the Exile," simply as a bookish man. To him all turned as

trusted guide in the varied perplexities created by new conditions and environment.

Seizing the opportunity of the reliance placed upon him, he summoned a Jewish Synod in the year 1000. Though obedience to him and his colleagues was voluntary, all gladly accepted their decisions as final authority for Jewish practice, and their decisions open a new chapter in Jewish law.

First and most important was the practical *abrogation of polygamy,* making a law of what was becoming a custom that a man should have but one wife. For monogamy is always presented as the ideal married state, even in the Bible.

Secondly, when unfortunately divorce had to be resorted to, he established new safeguards for the protection of the more helpless—the women. Henceforth, as distinct from Talmudic law, the wife's consent was necessary.

The *third* decision concerned those who were forced by cruel edict to forsake their faith for a time. The new law was in the direction of mercy; it declared that once they returned to the fold they must not be reproached. That such terrible expedients had to be considered was a sad commentary on the times of persecution. Alas! this very experience came home to Rabbi Gershom in the case of his own son. He was forced with others to abjure his faith, when a fanatic outbreak was launched against the Jews under Henry II. R. Gershom voiced the popular sorrow in a mournful poem and in a series of *Selichoth* (prayers of supplication for forgiveness).

The *fourth* decision touched a point of honor. The traveler who carried a letter from one friend to another

was forbidden to read it, though it were unsealed, under penalty of excommunication.

So Jewish law—officially closed with the completion of the Talmud—continued to have a further development through frequent *Responsa* and occasional synods. The expansion and classification of the law continued to be the chief occupation of Jewish scholars for several centuries to come.

Notes and References.

Monogamy.

Since Gershom's day monogamy has become Jewish law for the Occident. Two hundred years earlier the schools in Babylonia had made the taking of a second wife conditional on the consent of the first, although polygamy was the prevailing custom there.

Polygamy did not quite die out in Christendom till the sixteenth century.

Read *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages,* Abrahams, ch. vii, "Monogamy and the Home," p. 122.

Theme for Discussion:

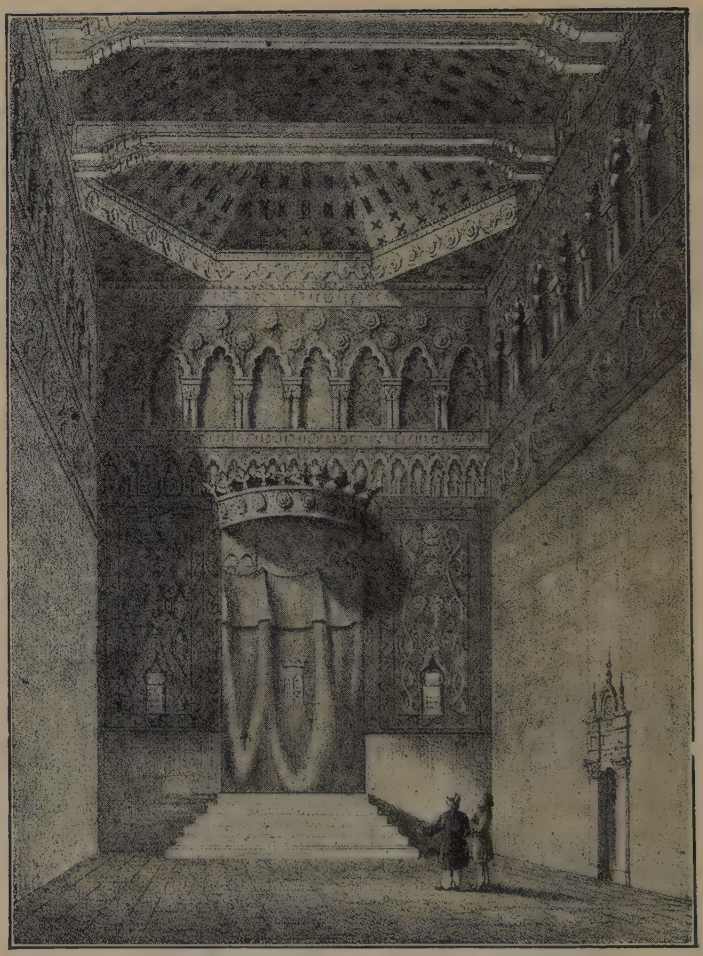
The advisability and practicability of a Synod today, advocated by some, to adjust Jewish practice in accordance with modern belief.

BOOK II.

SPAIN'S GOLDEN AGE

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

The Crescent.		Jewry.	
Entrance of Arabians into Spain...	711		
Independent Caliphate of Cordova	755		
Abder-Rahman I, Caliph	800		
Abder-Rahman II, Caliph	[illegible]		
Abder-Rahman III, Caliph	[illegible]		
		Chasdai Ibn Shaprut .....b.	[illegible]
		Italy. Sabbathai Donolo, physician	[illegible]
		Departure of the four scholars from Babylonia, about	[illegible]
		Chushiel, b. 900; fl.	[illegible]
		Chushiel, head of Kairuan Academy, about	[illegible]
Alhakim, Caliph...	[illegible]	Ibn Janach, Grammarian	[illegible]
(Orders translation of Bible into Arabic), about...	1000	rian	[illegible]
		Chayuj, Grammarian	990
		Samuel Ibn Nagdela, b.....	[illegible]
		Vizier 1027	
		Alfassi, b 1013	
		Solomon Ibn Gabirol, b.....1021	
Split up of Caliphate of Cordova and esta'lishment of Caliphates of Saragossa, Seville, Granada, Murcia and Toledo, about.....1000		Nagdela becomes Vizier of Granada	[illegible]
		Bachya, fl.....1050	
		Rashi, b.....1040	
Almoravide Conquest (Battle of Zallaka) 1086		Abu Husain (Nagdela's son), Vizier of Granada.....1055	
		Albalia, rabbi of Seville, about....1060	
Alfonso of Castile conquers Toledo 1014		Joseph Ibn Migash, b. 1077	
		Jehudah Halevi, b..1086	



INTERIOR OF SYNAGOGUE AT TOLEDO.

BOOK II. SPAIN'S GOLDEN AGE

CHAPTER VII.

UNDER THE CALIPHATE OF CORDOVA.

It was in 711 that the triumphant Arabians entered Spain (*T. Y.*, p. 309). Treated at first as a trans-Mediterranean dependency of Northern Africa, it was later governed by Emirs, appointed by the Caliph of Damascus. When a revolution occurred in the East and a new royal house established on the Moslem throne, the dispossessed Ommeyade dynasty migrated to Spain, severed all connections with Damascus, and established the independent Caliphate of Cordova in the year 755. This Western Caliphate endured for four centuries.

From that time the greatness of Moslem Spain began. The Christian forces that had, under the great Martel, checked the northwestern advance of the Mohammedans in the battle at Tours, now suffered reverses at the hands of the new and energetic dynasty, and its first king, Abder-Rahman I, even inflicted a defeat on Charlemagne.

Arabic Scholarship and Civilization.

Remarkable as were their victories in war,—their conquests extending through Asia, Africa and Europe, with a Caliphate in each continent,—far grander were their victories in peace. Their pen was mightier than their sword. They loved learning and under the fostering encouragement of broad-minded Caliphs splendid conquests were made in unmapped realms of scholarship. Science and literature, cultivated by the highest, were also diffused among the masses. No schools excelled theirs. This spread of education reacted favorably on social conditions in general; under Abder-Rahman II

(821-852) Moslem Spain was the best governed country in Europe. His successors followed his enlightened precedent. By the time we reach Abder-Rahman III, we find the government under complete orderly organization. He established a vigilant police system and furthered commerce; great was the volume of exports and imports for those times. Art and science were diligently fostered and already in that early day a scientific method of irrigation was devised for improving the soil.

What a world of difference such an environment meant for the Jews of the Spanish Peninsula!

Under the rule of the Visigoths in the seventh century they had been taxed, banned, mutilated and exiled. Bigoted kings such as Erwig and Egica and still more bigoted bishops had imposed baptism by force and had torn children from parents to insure their complete severance from the Synagogue (*T. Y.*, chap. xxxix). All that was over now.

The Moslem hailed the Jews with almost the heartiness that his ancestors had welcomed them in Arabia before Mahomet's day. They were further sought as the possessors of knowledge for which the Arabians thirsted. Jews certainly led the way in natural science. So in addition to those already there, many refugees from inhospitable surroundings found homes in the Peninsula. The blessings of religious liberty, personal security, and social esteem were theirs. Hand in hand the Moor and the Jew made explorations in the realms of knowledge, and their united achievements kindled a light in the Peninsula that shone the more brilliantly in contrast with the sombre background of Europe's Dark Ages.

Of Israel's literary activity in the first hundred years of Moslem rule we hear little or nothing. Periods of persecution are unfavorable to literary culture; and in

the generation or two immediately following, all energies were monopolized for material rehabilitation. So it was not till Abder-Rahman III, "Prince of the Faithful," became Caliph in 912 that we begin to hear of the Spanish Jew as scholar. Learned Jews were despatched to distant lands to gather books and to copy manuscripts. Soon the library of Cordova alone had 400,000 volumes. By the end of the tenth century the Spanish schools were famous throughout Europe.

From Babylon to Spain.

Just as this golden era was dawning in Spain the sun was setting in the Babylonian East. Before 950 the School of Sora had closed its doors and the last "Prince of the Exile" had closed his reign.

So the anxious rabbis sent forth four scholars of renown to their brethren west and south to gather funds for the re-establishment of the fallen School. Fate decided that these ambassadors of learning should render a service to Judaism rather than to Babylonia. In the story of their adventures it is difficult to disentangle history from tradition. Their ship being captured they were separated. Providence carried each, so runs the story, to a different land, to plant the seeds of Jewish scholarship. One was carried to Narbonne in France, another to Cairo in Egypt, a third gave a new impetus to learning in the old Jewish settlement of Kairuan in Tunis. But it is with the fourth we are most concerned.

Moses ben Chenoch.

His name was Moses ben Chenoch. The brutal captain endeavored to seize his beautiful wife. Facing the fearful alternative of death or dishonor, she readily

obeyed the Jewish injunction to choose the former; and, throwing herself in the sea became a martyr to her faith. Moses and his motherless boy were brought as slaves to Cordova. Ransomed by his brethren—a sacred obligation cheerfully borne by all Jewish communities in the Middle Ages—he found his way to the Jewish Academy already established. How much it tells of the nature of this driven people that a refugee will seek his brethren in the House of Learning! But rabbinic scholarship was still of too early a growth in Spain to have attained distinction. The ragged refugee sat in the background listening to the Talmudic discussion. Modestly suggesting a criticism to the presiding rabbi, the students at once recognized that they were in the presence of a scholar. With noble self-denial the teacher said, "I can no longer be your judge and rabbi; this poor stranger should take my place." Learning was the only aristocracy recognized by the rabbis. So Moses ben Chenoch became the head of the Cordova Academy and he brought new interest to the study of the Law. As Babylonia had now become independent of the teachers of Palestine, so Spain soon became independent of those of Babylonia.

The time was most propitious. The Caliph was not only a patron of letters but a litterateur himself, a poet of no mean order. He was delighted to learn that a scholar had arrived who would give such prestige to the Spanish Academy as to make it independent of the Eastern Gaonate. It meant, among other things, that the Jews would no longer be sending their money out of the country to support foreign academies. They would spend it at home. It recalls a similar policy of Charlemagne over a century earlier.

Like their Arabian ancestors, the Moors regarded the poetic gift as the hall-mark of a gentleman. So almost

an ideal status was attained in so far that scholars were appointed to the highest public offices. Under such a stimulating environment the Spanish period became the classic epoch of Jewish poetry.

Seeking men of literary culture for positions of eminence, it is not surprising that under this broad-minded regime many Jews should be welcomed in the service of the State. While in Christendom they were being shut out of all public office, we shall see them taking a steadily larger part in public administration in Spain. Here was a new outlet for their intellectual capacity. The Jew as statesman had not been heard of since the Temple's fall.

Chasdai as Statesman.

The first thus chosen, who attained lasting eminence was *Chasdai Ibn Shaprut.* We may say he was the first Jew who made his presence felt in Europe. For in the past, distinction so far had been attained only in Asia (Palestine) and in Africa (Egypt). Chasdai was the first of a long line of Jewish litterateurs, scientists and statesmen, appearing in one European land or another in almost unbroken succession to the present day.

Chasdai was born about the year 915, twenty-three years after Saadyah saw the light in Egypt (p. 39). He was an all-round scholar. Among other things he wrote on botany "as it had never been treated before." He was first brought to the notice of Abder-Rahman III as a physician. Later his value was discovered as a linguist, for among other languages he also knew Latin—a rare acquisition for Jew or Moor then. This meant that he could act as interpreter to ambassadors from Christian lands. Then his capacity as a diplomat became evident; so with growing reliance on his ability he became not only

the interpreter of the Caliph's emissaries, but one of them. This trust of the Caliph went further yet and he became confidential counselor. He was in fact an untitled vizier. He really fulfilled the cabinet functions that would now be styled Secretary of Foreign affairs, Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was also given control of the customs. But his greater services were in the realm of diplomacy. He strengthened the relations with both Leon and Navarre. His tact saved friction between the Caliph and the German Empire.

Chasdai
As Jew.

Splendid as were his services to the Moslem state, equally valuable were his services to the Jewish community. He was their representative to the State, their advocate in the hour of need—for not every Moslem was free from anti-Jewish prejudice. He corresponded with Jewish scholars in other lands and through foreign ambassadors was able to aid his brethren afar. Like many in our midst today, he believed that a religion needs a national background and that the possession of a State would give further stability and prestige to Judaism.

Hearing of the Jewish kingdom of the Chazars, he entered into correspondence with their king. It is to this correspondence that we are largely indebted for more intimate knowledge of this proselyte people. (See ch. v.)

Chasdai was largely responsible for the appointment of Moses ben Chenoch and for the importance given to the Talmudic academy. From his own purse he purchased many of its books and supported many of its scholars.

It was due to his enthusiasm and to the encouragement he rendered in all fields of learning that culture spread

from Cordova through the whole province of Andalusia. The critical study of Hebrew grammar to which the Karaites had given the impetus in the Orient was transplanted to this more favorable environment. Chasdai encouraged the writing of poetry, too. Imbibing the Arabian love of verse, the Spanish Jews entered eagerly into this field, at first, but following Arabian models. Then Dunash ben Labrat introduced metre. They did not confine themselves to the Synagogue liturgy as Kalir and his school (p. 26), but branched out into secular themes. So the way was prepared for the great poets yet to come.

Lucena and Granada also had their academies. The translation of the Mishna into Arabic shows that it was becoming their native tongue here as well as in the land of Saadyah; and that the Arabic version was asked for by the reigning Caliph, shows the interest of the Moors in Jewish literature.

The name Chasdai deserves to be given to this first Spanish epoch. It is worthy of notice that the spread of general culture did not lead to religious negligence—as it sometimes does—but rather to religious exaltation. It broadened the Jewish outlook without in any way lessening their spiritual earnestness.

Notes and References.

Moslem Spain included Arabs, Berbers, also styled Moors, Egyptians and Syrians.

Caliph Alhakin II, who asked for an Arabic translation of the Bible, was a great patron of learning. He collected, it is said, a library of 400,000 volumes.

Kairuan Academy.

Kairuan (Northern Africa), whither one of the four scholars from Babylonia was said to have drifted, had

already established a Jewish academy. Just as Moses ben Chenoch had been placed at the head of the Cordova school, so the refugee scholar Chushiel was made Rosh (Head) of the Kairuan academy. In this school was trained the all-round scholar Dunash, born in year 900. To Dunash, Kairuan owed a scientific comprehension of Judaism. This community revived the study of the Palestinian Talmud, which had been neglected for the Babylonian (*T. Y.*, p. 251). But this environment was not favorable for its long maintenance as a Jewish seat of yearning.

Hebrew Grammar.

To this period also belong Chayuj, father of Hebrew grammar, the first to grasp in its completeness the genius of the Hebrew tongue. His knowledge of Arabic enabled him to make it a comparative study.

Menachem ben Saruk, one of Chasdai's proteges, compiled a dictionary and grammar, superseding previous works of its kind.

Theme for Discussion:

Was the need for a Jewish nation greater in Chasdai's day than in ours?

THE SYNAGOGUE AT ERFURT

CHAPTER VIII.

JEWS AS VIZIERS.

Moslem Disunion.

At the end of the tenth century a conflict for the Caliphate led to civil war. The results were disastrous for the future of Moslem power in Spain; for the one Caliphate of Cordova was now split into a dozen. The Moslem had not learned that "in union there is strength." They knew how to conquer lands, but not so well how to hold them.

The chief of these minor Caliphates were Saragossa, Seville, Granada, Murcia and Toledo. (Note these places on the map at end of book). In consequence of the disturbed conditions following the civil war, many Jews left Cordova for these different principalities.

Among those who emigrated to Malaga in Granada was *Samuel Ibn Nagdela,* a man on whom fell the mantle of Chasdai and of whom also we may say he was "gifted with a double portion of his spirit." As in Cordova, so here, Jews were admitted to posts of honor in the public service.

Ibn Nagdela Vizier of Granada.

Ibn Nagdela, true to classic Jewish tradition, earned his living not by his learning but by his trade. Yet fidelity to the latter won recognition for the former. Brought to the notice of the Grand Vizier by his excellent penmanship and his knowledge of tongues, he was engaged as secretary. Here in the Vizier's service his greater

gifts were revealed. He won his master's confidence, and, like Chasdai, was gradually consulted on all affairs of State. On his deathbed, the vizier confessed to the king of Granada, who was lamenting his irreparable loss, that his great diplomatic success had been due to his humble Jewish secretary. What wonder, then, that the wise king should now appoint him to the vacant office of vizier, in 1027! Here was the shopkeeper raised to the position of prime minister, like Joseph of old. Upon his shoulders more than upon those of the king rested the responsibility of the State. His post was something like that of a premier of England, unlimited by Parliament.

No fact can better demonstrate the social status of the Jews under the rule of the Mohammedan Berbers in Granada than that one of their number should be raised to the highest State office. But some zealous Moslems did not like to see an Israelite placed over them—for average humanity will tolerate minorities only so long as they are kept humbly in the background. But Nagdela's graciousness disarmed his would-be enemies, and his modesty won over his rivals. So he continued in office under the next king with added powers. Here is an instance of his magnanimity: Reviled by a spice dealer in the royal presence, the irate king ordered the offender's tongue cut out. Nagdela interposed and tried the gentler method of overcoming evil with good. "I have removed his evil tongue and put a good one in its place."

On the king's death, Ibn Nagdela risked his life in support of the son, Badis, for the throne, against the rivalry of the younger brother. Since this timely aid helped to secure the kingdom to the rightful though not wholly worthy heir, it immensely increased his prestige. He now became more than ever the power behind the throne of Granada.

Ibn Nagdela as "Nagid."

Now to consider the man in relation to his coreligionists: From the nature of his office, Nagdela had to use the formula "Mahomet, God's prophet." It is a nice question of moral discrimination as to whether he was justified as a Jew in publicly uttering that which was part of a Moslem's declaration of faith, but which in one sense a Jew could sincerely voice. Great religious teachers of all faiths may be called prophets of God. But granting he had that thought in mind, to the Moslem it meant the one prophet superseding all others.

Certainly, when it came to his practical service, he was as loyal to his coreligionists as Nagid (prince) as he was to the Moslems as vizier. To the Jewish community he was, so to speak, Resh Galutha and Gaon in one without really possessing either of those titles. But his power was exercised not in display of authority but in rendering timely aid. Very valuable was his assistance granted to students, both as patron and scholar. This versatile man found time in the midst of affairs of State to compile a Talmud manual (*Mebo*) explaining all technical expressions, a Talmud commentary, a treatise on grammar and a psalter for the synagogue. From his pen, too, came proverbs, philosophic essays and songs. Not a great poet, yet he wrote poetry, as did all litterateurs of that time. So, under his fostering direction, Spanish Jewish culture throve and spread.

The "Ethics of the Fathers" (a book of the Mishna) speaks of three crowns—the crown of the Law, of the priesthood and the crown of royalty; but adding that the crown of good deeds excels them all. His grateful coreligionists ascribed something of each of these to Nagdela with yet an added crown of fame. For when he

died, in 1055, he left behind him that good name, "better than precious ointment," shedding lustre upon his time and lamented alike by Arab and by Jew.

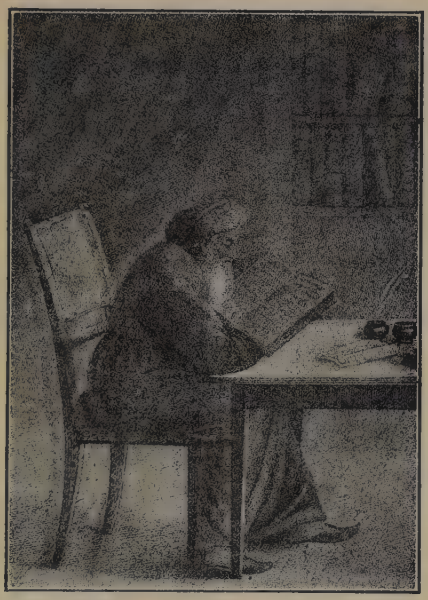
Distinguished Successors.

Abu Husain Joseph Ibn Nagdela succeeded his father as vizier of Granada, and, as Nagid of the Jewish community. He, too, was a scholar and a patron of scholars but did not inherit his father's modesty. Whether it was his too marked preference for his coreligionists in his appointments or the somewhat ostentatious splendor surrounding him, he certainly aroused the antagonism of the upper classes. They even fabricated against him a charge of poisoning the prince. Humanely frustrating a project of King Badis to massacre the Arabs (opponents of the later arrived Moors), he fell still further from favor. Accused of conspiring with the enemies of Granada, he was cruelly slain, and some fifteen families shared his fate; in other towns, many were exiled. This was the first persecution in Moslem Spain.

In others of these independent Spanish provinces Jews continued to be received with favor. The Granada outbreak was but a passing wave; still such waves, revealing occasional jealousy or bigotry, might pass again and did. Saragossa also chose Jewish viziers. One, Jekuthiel Hassan, whose untimely death was immortalized in an elegy of Solomon Gabirol, the subject of the next chapter. Another, Abu-Fadhl, to tell of whom that he was a poet is almost to recount a platitude. In powerful Seville, Albalia, rabbi of the community, was court astronomer and astrologer! Astrology had not yet been expelled from the family of the sciences.

Other provinces followed the example of Seville and

Saragossa. To such congenial surroundings came Isaac Alfassi of Fez to become rabbi of Lucena. He will always be remembered for his digest of Talmudic law, appropriately styled *Halachoth* (the term applied to Tal-



ISAAC ALFASSI

mudic legal decisions as distinct from *Agadath*—the narrative portion, (*T. Y.*, p. 187). In this digest, more famous than any of its predecessors, he wisely omits all laws that had lost practical application.

Decline of the Moors.

Yes, all went well for Israel in Moorish Spain. But its break-up into petty principalities marks the decline of

its power. So far, the advance of the resolute forces of Christendom had held back at the Pyrenees; but they were not slow to watch their advantage, while the Moors were weakening their own power by fighting among themselves.

Unfortunately for their permanent possession of Spain, the Moors contemptuously disregarded their northern neighbors in the mountains. It is always dangerous to slight an enemy. Step by step the Christian was creeping southward. When we reach the middle of the twelfth century, we will see he had acquired three kingdoms in the Peninsula—Castile, Aragon and Navarre.

For the time being the Jews also saw no alarm in these advances. The enlightened liberality of the Moslem favorably affected their northern neighbors and the three Christian nations of Spain followed the tolerant example of the Moors. But we shall later see that as their sway increased their liberality decreased.

In Christian Castile.

Alfonso VI of Castile was the most enterprising of these Christian kings. He conquered Toledo and tried to take Seville. He was broad-minded and enlightened. Finding the great capacity of the Jews so well fitted them for offices of state and the delicate diplomacy of ambassadors, he entrusted posts of honor and responsibility to them. It is true the powerful pope, Gregory VII, thundered his objections, writing that "to allow Christians to be subordinate to the Jews is the same as oppressing God's church and exalting Satan's synagogue." But Alfonso paid small heed and tried to institute equality among all his subjects.

Alarmed at Alfonso's conquests, the Sevillian monarch

called in the aid of his Mohammedan brethren across the Mediterranean in Africa—the Almoravides. In 1086 the Christian army was routed at Zallaka, patriotic Jews fighting on both sides, each group loyal to the particular government under which they were living. The Almoravides now became the ruling power in southern Spain and for a time restored Moslem prestige. Though less tolerant than the Berbers, they appointed Jews to high posts of trust. So Christendom's advance was checked; but only for a time.

Notes and References.

Ibn Janach and Ibn Migash

Ibn Janach (990-1050), one of the exiles of Saragossa, something of a poet, notable as a physician and likewise as a biblical exegete, won renown as a master in grammatical structure of Hebrew. He went beyond the conclusions of Chayuj, his revered teacher. The science of Hebrew syntax was his creation—and the theme of his greatest work, "The Critique."

Joseph Ibn Migash (1067-1141) was a pupil and worthy successor of Alfassi.

Jewish Viziers

One critic considers that the so-called Jewish viziers and treasurers of Spain were not very dissimilar to the Hof-Juden, court Jews, of whom we hear in the eighteenth century, Graetz places them much higher.

Theme for Discussion:

In contrast with Ibn Nagdela, David Salomons and Baron Rothschild in 1848 refused to take the oath "on the true faith of a Christian" and preferred to resign their seats to which they had been elected in the English Parliament.

CHAPTER IX.

IBN GABIROL, POET AND PHILOSOPHER

"I will engrave my songs indelibly upon the heart of the world, so that no one can efface them."—GABIROL.

Genius needs only a favorable environment to reveal itself. The Spanish period was a golden age in Jewish literature, because it was a golden age in Jewish history.

"No one star sets before another rises," says a sage. But here the constellations shone side by side in luminous prodigality.

In Solomon Ibn Gabirol we meet one of the most original minds among Jews or Arabs.

Ibn Gabirol's Youth.

Of Gabirol the man we know little. Born in Malaga about 1021, the early loss of his parents gave a serious bent to a disposition naturally pensive. This may have been intensified by struggle with poverty. Driven to Saragossa by the same civil war that also brought Nagdela there, he was later compelled to leave, to escape the enemies he made through his morose, perhaps haughty, and highly sensitive character. Genius is often misunderstood. Yet he found kind patrons—first in Yekuthiel Hassan, the Jewish vizier, and later in Ibn Nagdela.

His strange temperament may be indicated in these lines from his "Night Thoughts":

"I follow fortune not, where'er she lead,
Lord o'er myself, I banish her, compel,
And though her clouds should rain no blessed dew,
Though she withhold the crown, the heart's desire,

Though all deceive, though honey change to gall,
Still am I lord, and will in freedom strive."

Translated by Emma Lazarus.

The poet was already revealed in the youth and his fame soon spread to French Provence in the west and as far as Babylonia in the east. Some verses were written by the lad in praise of his friend Yekûthiel; but soon the eulogy was changed to an elegy, for the vizier was slain.

Adapting the Arabic poetic canons, he brought Hebrew poetry to its highest stage of development. The Hebrew tongue was moulded into new rhyme and rhythm in the hands of this young master, who, at nineteen, dexterously treated in verse so unpromising a subject as Hebrew grammar, and who put into rhyme the 613 precepts, arranged alphabetically and acrostically.

His poems have been translated into many tongues. We append some translated extracts:—

From "Meditation on Life."

(*Used in Yom Kippur Memorial Service.*)

Forget thine anguish,
  Vexed heart, again.
Why shouldst thou languish
  With earthly pain?
The husk shall slumber,
  Bedded in clay
Silent and sombre,
  Oblivion's prey!
But, Spirit immortal,
Thou at Death's portal,
  Trembles with fear.
If he caress thee,
Curse three or bless thee,
  Thou must draw near,
  From him the worth of thy works to hear.

Life is a vine branch;
  A vintager, death;

He threatens and lowers
More near with each breath.
Then hasten, arise!
Seek God, oh my soul!
For time quickly flies,
Still far as the goal.
Vain heart praying dumbly,
Learn to prize humbly,
The meanest of fare.
Forget all thy sorrow,
Behold, death is there!

Translated by Emma Lazarus.

What Is Man?

Almighty! what is man?
The haughty son of time
Drinks deep of sin,
And feeds on crime
Seething like waves that roll,
Hot as a glowing coal.
And wilt thou punish him for sins inborn?
Lost and forlorn,
Then like the weakling he must fall,
Who some great hero strives withal.
Oh, spare him, therefore! let him win
Grace for his sin!

Almighty! what is man?
A withered bough!
When he is awestruck by approaching doom
Like a dried blade of grass, so weak, so low,
The pleasure of his life is changed to gloom.
He crumbles like a garment spoiled with moth;
According to his sins wilt Thou be wroth?
He melts like wax before the candle's breath,
Yea, like thin water, so he vanisheth.
Oh, spare him, therefore, for Thy gracious name,
And be not too severe upon his shame!

Almighty! what is man?
A faded leaf,
If thou dost weigh him in the balance—lo!

He disappears—a breath that thou dost blow.
His heart is ever filled
With lust of lies unstilled.
Wilt bear in mind his crime
Unto all time?
He fades away like clouds sun-kissed,
Dissolves like mist.
Then spare him! let him love and mercy win,
According to Thy grace, and not according to his sin!

Translated by Emma Lazarus.

From "Happy He Who Saw of Old."

Happy he who saw of old
The high priest, with gems and gold
All adorned from crown to hem,
Tread thy courts, Jerusalem,
Till he reached the sacred place
Where the Lord's especial grace
Ever dwelt, the centre of the whole.
Happy he whose eyes
Saw at last the cloud of glory rise,
But to hear of it afflicts our soul.

Happy he who saw the crowd,
That in adoration bowed,
As they heard the priest proclaim,
"One, Ineffable, the Name,"
And they answered, "Blessed be
God, the Lord eternally,
He whom all created worlds extol."
Happy he whose eyes
Saw at last the cloud of glory rise;
But to hear of it afflicts our soul.

Translated by Nina Davis.

Verses *from* "A Song of Redemption."

Captive of sorrow on a foreign shore,
A handmaid as 'neath Egypt's slavery:
Through the dark day of her bereavement sore
She looketh unto Thee.
Restore her sons, O mighty One of old!

Her remnant tenth shall cause man's strife to cease.
O speed the message; swiftly be she told
Good tidings, which Elijah shall unfold,
Daughter of Zion, sing aloud! behold
Thy Prince of Peace!
Wounded and crushed, beneath my load I sigh,
Despised and abject, outcast, trampled low;
How long, O Lord, shall I of violence cry,
My heart dissolved with woe?
How many years, without a gleam of light,
Has thraldom been our lot, our portion pain!
With Ishmael as a lion in his might
And Persia, as an owl of darksome night,
Beset on either side, behold our plight
Betwixt the twain.

Translated by Nina Davis.

The "Royal Crown."

A poem, partly religious and partly philosophical, called *"Kether Malchuth"* (The Royal Crown), depicts the sublimity of God and His relation to the world and to man, and in turn man's responsibility to his Maker.

Portions of his work are incorporated in our Ritual for Atonement. We quote some translated extracts:

My God, I know that mine iniquity
Is heavier than my feeble words express,
And to recount my trespasses to Thee
Doth memory fail, for they are numberless.

Yet some do haunt my mind, but these indeed
Are as a drop of water from my sea
Of sin, whose roaring billows may recede,
And by confession, calm'd and silenced be.
O Thou in Heav'n, pray list, and pardon me.

Though great the sorrows that o'erwhelm my brow,
These sorrows issue from Thy righteous hand,
Where mercy ever dwelleth; hence I bow
And court the shaft that sped at Thy command.

My God, I mourn for self-accusers rise;
"Thou hast thy Maker grievously defied;
Has acted graceless folly in His eyes,
For mercies when His judgment bade Him chide."

Thou need'st no service at my humble hand,
Yet gav'st me life and blessed my happy birth;
Thy spirit bade my budding soul expand
To blossom on Thy fair and wondrous earth.

And Thou hast reared me with a father's care,
Strengthen'd my limbs and nursed the tender child;
Lull'd on my mother's gentle bosom, where
Thine all-protecting wing and blessing smiled.

And when I grew and all erect could stand,
Thou did'st enfold me in Thy fostering arms
Guiding my tott'ring steps with Thy right hand
To manly strength which scorneth all alarms.

The ways of wisdom did'st Thou then command
To shield my heart 'gainst sorrow and distress,
Conceal'd within the shadow of Thy hand,
When fear and wrath did all the land oppress.

How many an unseen danger have I pass'd!
Before the wound the balm is yet prepared;
A remedy before the spear is cast,
The foeman vanquished ere the war's declared.

When plenty reign'd, my share of wealth I won,
But when I roused wtih provocation sore
Thy wrath, as doth a father to his son,
Thou did'st chastise, that I should sin no more.

I am unworthy of the saving love
Thou hast to me Thy servant ever shown,
So must I waft my song of praise above,
And unto Thee my gratitude make known.

My soul, Thy gift divine, was pure as light;
Alas! no more, my sin hath stain'd its crest.
I wrestled with the Yezer-Ra* in might,
But all too weak I sank—yet not to rest.

* Evil inclination.

Contrite Thy saving pardon I entreat,
I feel Thy glory flood my yearning soul;
Vanquish'd proud sin is helpless at my feet,
And I, Thy servant, reach Thy radiant goal.

Translated by Elsie Davis.

Ibn Gabirol as Philosopher and Moralist.

Later the poet ripened into the philosopher. His profound mind wrestled with the deepest problems in life—God, the soul and immortality.

His philosophy has been likened to that of Philo. (*T. Y.* chap. xvii.) First, because both belonged to the Neo-Platonic school (*see notes*); second, both linked Greek and Oriental philosophy; and, third, both exercised a great influence on Christian thought.

There is, however, an important point of divergence. Philo adapted his philosophy to the theology of Judaism —it was, therefore, a Jewish philosophy. Gabirol evolved his system independent of its relation to his Faith or to theology in general.

In his great work, "Source of Life," he presented all existence in three principles:

(a) *God;* (b) *the world,* composed of matter and form; (c) *the will,* the intermediary between spiritual God and the material world. Everything came into existence as emanation from God.

Like many philosophers before and after him, Gabirol declared, we cannot know any attribute of God; we can declare only that He exists.

Now to consider this versatile man as teacher of of morals. Passing by his early attempt of a comparative treatment of the ethics of Jewish (biblical) and Arabic moralists and a later compilation of maxims styled "Choice of Pearls," we turn at once to his great

ethical work, his "Improvement of the Moral Qualities." Following the same principle as in his Fons Vitæ, "Source of Life," of which it may be considered supplementary, he does not seek to present the ethics of Judaism, but ethics *per se,* though it contains copious quotations from the Bible.

The outline of his ethical theory is as follows:

Man is the highest creation in the visible world, being gifted with speech and reason. Hence the use of that reason to acquire knowledge must be his first aim, as far as his finite mind can reach. Knowledge of himself must be his chief concern. The improvement of his character, following "the middle path" of virtue—which with the gift of free-will is within his power—should be man's next ideal. Indeed the two powers, intellectual and moral, are united, for the more he throws off the sensual and the unworthy, the higher his mental vision can soar. So he advances and each spiritual and intellectual attainment brings new joy, until at last, having divested himself of all impurity, he attains the immortal bliss of God-like nature. It was the belief of Gabirol that the soul is always in the exalted state before it descends into earthly life.

It is remarkable how the greatest thinkers of the Middle Ages were hampered by ignorance of natural science. Gabirol accepts a popular concept of a "world soul." There is all the difference between our teaching today that Nature teems with life and that Nature is itself alive. Again, we find him believing that the stars determined the quality and quantity of man's talents! For astrology was still accepted by scholars as a real science. He also followed an accepted notion then that man is a little world. We may call him that, too, at times, but only as a figure of speech. Supposing that there were

but "four elements," he is led to make them correspond to four main parts of the body. This supposition leads to a classifying of the vices and virtues in groups of four. Elsewhere he classifies them under the five senses.

These scientific limitations did not affect the soundness of his moral views. He is keen to observe how qualities may shade off into defects—he sees that pride may become arrogance, modesty diffidence, that love may be cruel, anger righteous and bravery foolhardiness. There is good and bad joy. His cure for vice, "the sickness of the soul," as he styles it, is heroic—renounce temporal pleasure and give yourself up to exalted contemplation.

Little is left to be said of the rest of his career. After years of wandering, he died in Valencia, about 1070. Legend even says that he died by the hand of an Arabian rival. His early orphanage, his aloofness from companionship, his restless wandering from city to city, may be the unfortunate reasons why so little is known of this great man who earned the title of the Hebrew Plato, who brought back Greek philosophy to Europe from the Orient, where one of its most illustrious expounders had also been a Jew, Philo, a thousand years before.

Notes and References.

Neo-Platonism:

This was the last attempt to bridge the dualism between subjective and objective—or, let us say, between God and the world. One of its great expounders was Plotinus of Egypt.

There is in it a touch of mysticism of which we will speak in a later chapter—for its teachers thought to reach the truth through a state of ecstasy or rapture and God by intuition. We are familiar through Philo with the theory that the world is an emanation or effluence from God, but we shall have more of this in treating the Kabala.

Scholasticism:

Scholasticism was an attempt to combine Christianity with philosophy. It sought to reconcile faith and knowledge.

In an article, "Ethics of Solomon Gabirol," by Rosin, *Jewish Quarterly Review,* vol. iii, will be found some of Gabirol's maxims and a few of the anecdotes with which he enlivened his ethics.

"Source of Life."

To the Jews, Gabirol is known for his poetry, not for his philosophy. It is for that reason that his great philosophic work, *M'kor Chayim,* "Source of Life," treated in the manner of Plato's Dialogues, while it powerfully influenced the theories of the three great scholastics—Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus in its Latin translation (Fons Vitæ)—was not suspected by them of being a Jewish production; for the name Ibn Gabirol in process of translation from Arabic to Latin came gradually to be transformed out of all recognition in the form—Avicebrol.

This discovery was made by the Jewish scholar—Solomon Munk.

Choice of Pearls.

Published with translations and notes, by Rev. B. H. Ascher, London, 1859.

Poetry.

Translations will be found in *Songs of a Semite,* Emma Lazarus; *Songs of Exile,* Nina Davis, Jewish Publication Society; *The Jewish Year,* Alice Lucas, Macmillan & Co.; *Jewish Quarterly Review,* vol. viii.

Ethics.

Improvement of the Moral Qualities, trans. S. S. Wise, Columbia University Press, N. Y.

Theme for Discussion:

Influence of our knowledge of nature and its laws on our philosophy of life.

CHAPTER X.

BACHYA AND OTHER MORALISTS.

Now we are going to tell about another type of man who flourished during the Golden Era of Spain, Bachya Ibn Pakudah. We will call him a moral philosopher. We have said that little was known of the personal life of Gabirol; still less is there to tell of his contemporary, Bachya. We gather the meagre facts that he flourished in Saragossa around the year 1040 and that he was one of the three judges appointed by the synagogue to decide all questions for the community on Jewish law. They were called *Dayanim*. Their court was styled *Beth Din* (House of Law). They are maintained in Jewish communities to this day.

A Moral Philosopher.

But Bachya's chief concern was not to answer questions of law and ritual, but those of moral duty and life. His character, as far as we can gather, was consistent with the great task he set himself to do—to prepare a system of ethics for his people. He took life earnestly; he devoted himself to study as a sacred duty—for it was his feeling that every door of learning was an opening to a fuller knowledge of God. While some ever fear that too much research into reals of wisdom might undermine faith—for him knowledge only strengthened its foundations. For his piety was unspoiled by narrowness—let us say he was too religious to be narrow. He learnt from all persons and from all things. Naturally he made grammatical and scientific study subordinate to moral culture. He studied not for intellectual pleasure nor for the power that knowledge brings nor for profit. He sat at the feet of the sages that he might learn the

way of God and walk in it. Here was the true union of literature and life.

His piety took an ascetic turn. He regarded self-denial as the highest human ideal and believed that it was well that a few at least should lead the abstemious life as models for the rest of mankind.

On the whole, Judaism as such has not encouraged asceticism though leaving a place for it. It preaches sobriety and moderation rather than rigid abstinence. None the less, asceticism, when gladly undertaken, is a legitimate expression of religious life, which we must not ignore—for our varied history offers many examples of the voluntary choice of the abstinent life, from the Nazarites and Essenes of antiquity down to certain groups of mystics nearer our own time. Rabbi Meier taught: "This is the path of the Torah: A morsel of salt shalt thou eat, thou shalt drink also water by measure and shalt sleep upon the ground and live a life of painfulness."

"Duties of the Heart."

Bachya's *magnum opus,* great work, written in Arabic, but best known in its Hebrew translation, is called *"Chavoth Halevavoth"* (Duties of the Heart.) Philosophically, he inclined towards the Neo-Platonic school like Ibn Gabirol. But while Gabirol's "Source of Life" was rather neglected by the Jews, Bachya's "Duties" was very popular and exercised a profound influence over Israel. It has not only been translated in many tongues and expanded in many commentaries, but special abridgements were compiled for private devotion.

This work, excepting perhaps that of his contemporary, Gabirol, was really the first system of Ethics in Jewish literature. *Pirke Aboth* ("Ethics of the Fathers," in the Mishna) did not formulate an ethical *system* any

more than the biblical books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes or the Apocryphal books of "Wisdom of Solomon" and "Ecclesiasticus." All of these contain miscellaneous maxims and homilies.

Indeed Bachya felt "called" to write this book in answer to a sore need. He noticed that the rabbinical law was largely concerned with ceremonial, and with duties of the body, or at best with external measurements of right and wrong. He would lay stress on the *internal* motives of conduct. With such we may class—the tenth commandment: the phrase of Ps. xv, "Speaking the truth in one's heart:" and the sincere Pharisees—the highest class of the seven indicated in the Talmud—"those who do the will of their father because they love Him."

He bases Judaism on three pillars—*Reason, Revelation* and *Tradition.* Although he was versed in philosophy, his aim was not to evolve a philosophy of Judaism, to appeal to the intellect, but a work of exhortation to appeal to the heart—human duty in its widest application. He demonstrated earnestness of purpose and with great power of expression.

The work is divided into ten divisons that he calls "gates," corresponding to ten principles on which he based the spiritual life:

First Gate: *God.* The unity of God. God is to be realized first through the mind by profound thought, second through the heart by love. He argues from the created world that there is a First Cause, and, from the harmony of the universe, to that Cause being one.

Second Gate: *Reflection.* It is man's duty to ponder on God and His wisdom as displayed in the wonders of nature and man.

Third Gate: *Worship of God,* Who gives without asking return from man.

Fourth Gate: *Trust in Divine Providence.* This gives true content in this life and confidence for the soul in the life hereafter.

Fifth Gate: *The Consecration of Work*—in unity and sincerity of purpose.

Sixth Gate: *Humility.* This arises from contemplation of divine grandeur; it teaches patience and charitableness.

Seventh Gate: *Repentance.* This consists of the recognition of sin, confession, the resolution of reform, and change of heart.

Eighth Gate: *Self-Examination.* This section dwells on the exalted state of the soul that acquires spiritual knowledge by intuition.

Ninth Gate: *The Ascetic Life,* aloof from the world. Sanctioned by the biblical institution of the Nazarite, he regarded it is a most salutary discipline of the soul.

Tenth Gate: *Love of God.* Life's aim. The soul's longing for its Maker, whose service is contained in the Law, is not a burden but a joy

Here are some extracts from the "Duties":

Knowledge of the Unseen.

The wisdom of the Torah is divided into two parts: First: Wisdom of the visible, that enables us to know the duties of the body and its members. Second: Duties of the heart and mind that concern thought and feeling and whose fulfilment is entirely in the hidden depths of the human heart and soul. . . . These form the inexhaustible source of innumerable virtues and obligations.

The obligation to fulfil the duties of the heart and mind is greater than any other, for, whether they refer to the commands of Reason or to those of Scripture or Tradition, they are the foundation of all the precepts; and if there chance to be even the slightest failure in the ethics of the soul, there can be no proper fulfilment of any external ethical duty.

No act of any kind is done completely unless the soul delights in doing it. So with sinful conduct, it is not the act itself but the sinful intention by which one incurs guilt.

Humility.

The truly humble man will mourn for all the mistakes made by other men, and not triumph or rejoice over them.

Among the aids to the cultivation of humility are the contemplation of the greatness of man's obligation to the Creator. . . . and on the insignificance of man in comparison with even this earth; while in comparison with the greatness of the Creator the whole universe is as nothing.

When one of the Chassidim passed a dog's carcass, the disciples said "how offensively it smells!" The teacher said "how white are its teeth!" If it be wrong to speak disparagingly of a dead dog how much more so of a living man; and if it be merit to praise a dead dog for the whiteness of its teeth, how much more is it a duty to find out and praise the least merit in an intellectual human being.

Humility brings content—for a humble man assigns no special rank to himself and is satisfied with whatever comes to him.

We must study the universe so as to understand the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, but we must study the human species—the nearest and most obvious evidence of divine wisdom. When you have studied all that can be known of the universe do not think that you know all about the wisdom and powers of God. For here he has only manifested just so much as is necessary for the good of man.

Faith.

To serve God we must trust God. There should be no thought or intention in all one does except to do it for the sake of God alone, with no thought of human praise or the fear of man, or of advantage, or of the removal of dangers in this world or in a future state.

Those who love God will do right without hope of reward, and will forsake evil without fear of punishment.

A man should desire to be kept from both poverty and riches.

The Torah permits our swearing by the name of the Creator to what is true, but I counsel you not to take an oath by the holy name of God. Say simply "yes" or "no."

A Group of Moralists.

The following are some ethical teachings of Jewish moralists of Spain and also of other lands:

R. Eleazar B. Jehuda, of Worms. (Fl. 1238.)

From *Rokeach.*

Temptation.

There is no skill or cleverness to be compared to that which avoids temptation; there is no force, no strength that can equal piety.

If thou hadst lived in the dread days of martyrdom, and the peoples had fallen on thee to force thee to apostatize from thy faith, thou wouldst surely, as did so many, have given thy life in its defense. Well, then, fight now the fight laid on thee in the better days, the fight with evil desire.

From the *Book of Pious Souls.*

Begun by R. Jehudah b. Samuel, of Regensburg.

Business Integrity.

Be not disputatious and quarrelsome with people, whatever be their faith. Be honorable in thy business dealings; do not say that such or such a price has been offered thee for thy wares when the thing is not true.

No blessing rests on the money of people who clip coin, make a practice of usury, use false weights and measures and are in general not honest in business.

Many things are permitted by the law, the doing of which may lay upon a man the rendering of a heavy account some day or other.

Thou wouldst do better to live on charity than to ab-

scond with money not thine, to the disgrace of the Jewish faith and name.

Duties to Non-Jews

Mislead no one through thy actions designedly, be he Jew or non-Jew.

If a contract be made between Jews and non-Jews, binding to mutual observance and performance, the first must fulfil it even if the last fail to perform that to which they are bound.

If a Jew attempt to kill a non-Jew and the latter only wishes to defend himself, but not in return to kill, we are bound to help him in his self-defense.

In thy intercourse with non-Jews, be careful to be as wholly sincere as in that with Jews; needst not that thou obtrude on him who is no Jew argument as to his religious errors.

If one non-Jew seek counsel of thee, tell him where he will find a true man and not one who is a deceiver, in the place whither he repaireth.

If thou seest a strange man of another faith about to commit a sin, prevent its coming to pass if it be in thy power, and herein let the prophet Jonah be thy model.

Faith and Kindness.

If anyone offer thee an amulet, alleging it to be useful in helping to favor or wealth, carry it not, but place thine undivided confidence in God alone.

Let man in his solitary hours feel the same repugnant shame of evil in the sight of God, as he would be commit wrong in the sight of men.

If a rich man and a poor man be sick, and thou seest all the world going to see the rich man, go thou to the poor one, even though he be ignorant and unlettered.

Rather be intimate and work with an uneducated man of generous soul than a learned one close-fisted.

The ancients of our nation composed works and sent them forth without their names; they disclaimed to seek recompensing delight for their labor in this lower earthly life.

There was once a rich man who would build a beautiful synagogue at his own charge alone and suffered not

the congregation to contribute to his pious work, because he would that the memorial should be of him and his posterity alone. But ere he died his children all were dead.

R. Eleazar B. Samuel Ha-Levi.
(b. about 1250.)

I lay on my children my injunction or advice that at morning, immediately after prayer, they read some passages in the Pentateuch or Psalms, or do some work of mercy. In their intercourse with others, Jews or non-Jews, let them be conscientious and anxious to do right, amiable and accommodating, and never speak when speech is superfluous; so will they be guarded against uttering words of calumny or mockery against others.

From *The Book of Morals* (Fifteenth Century).

The thread on which the different good qualities of human beings are strung, as pearls, is—the *fear of God*. When the fastenings of this fear are unloosed, the pearls roll in all directions and are lost one by one.

A habit to be most especially inculcated and commended is that of *cleanliness*.

The sweeter *self-love* makes our own ignorance to us, the more bitter do we become towards others, the less accessible to all opportunity of reform.

The Courage of Humility.

Let a man be never ashamed to execute the commands of religion, even though he be mocked therefor; never be ashamed to confess the truth, to set another man right, to put a question to a teacher when something is not well understood. But let a man be well on his guard against putting others to shame, or lay bare wantonly the failings of a neighbor.

When thou seest that men are not what they should be, do not rejoice over the fact, but grieve, for thou shouldst pray even on thy enemy's behalf that he serve God.

Be *grateful* for, not blind to, the many, many sufferings which thou art spared; thou art no better than those who have been searched out and racked by them.

Berachja ha-Nakdan (About 1260).

(From *The Book of Fables*) Spain.

Miscellaneous Maxims.

Prefer the possession of one thing to the mere expectation of two.

A small certainty is better than a large peradventure.

Be a servant among noble-minded men, rather than a chieftain over the vulgar.

If thou bearest thyself in this world like a guest receiving its hospitality, men will try to find for thee a place of honor and a place of profit.

The proud cedar is felled, while the humble shrub is left alone; fire ascends and goes out, water descends and is not lost.

Prefer freedom and content to all luxury at the prison of a stranger's table.

Notes and References.

"Duties of the Heart":

The translated extracts are from Edward Collins, Orient Press, London.

For Bachya's endorsement of monasticism, see *Graetz' History of the Jews* (translation), vol. iii, chap. ix.

A Group of Moralists:

The selections in this chapter are from Zunz's *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*. Translated for the American Jewish Publication Society, N. Y., 1875.

Theme for Discussion:

Bachya said knowledge deepens faith; others that it undermines it.

CHAPTER XI.

JEHUDA HALEVI.

"Er sung fur alle Zeiten und Gelegenheiten, und wurde bald der Liebling seines Volkes.—ZUNZ.

Jehuda Halevi was born in Toledo in Old Castile, in the very year, 1086, in which it was conquered by the Christian King Alfonso VI (p. 72). So both Moor and Gentile were among his early associations.

A great poet of the Jews, Halevi deserves to be known as a great poet of mankind. For, although he laid the best product of his genius on the altar of Judaism's ideals, his interests were wide and his themes universal—characteristic of the Spanish school. Only in lands of oppression was the Jew thrown back upon himself and his interests narrowed to his own people. Halevi's education favored broad culture, for it included, as well as Hebrew literature, astronomy, medicine and all branches of mathematics. He was as cheerful as Gabirol was morose, and where the latter made foes, the winning graciousness of Halevi brought him many eminent friends. Yet eulogy did not spoil his lovable nature.

Although verse-making formed part of the broad and varied education of the Jewish youth of Spain, he was not a poet by training, but by the necessity of his nature. Every occasion in the lives of his friends was the opportunity for a poem—epithalamia [nuptial songs], on their marriages and elegies on their deaths. At the same time the Jewish community sought his pen to commemorate religious celebrations. It can be imagined how welcome he was in all literary circles. He sang of wine, of

love, of careless youth. His wit was always ready to enliven a gathering. He turned riddles. Here is one, the answer being a pair of scissors:

"Happy lovers learn our law;
Be joined in one as we.
Aught that passes through we saw,
And again are one, you see."

Translated by Joseph Jacobs.

"What is it that's blind with an eye in its head,
And the race of mankind its use cannot spare,
Spends all its life in clothing the dead,
And always itself is naked and bare?
A needle.

Translated by Joseph Jacobs.

He painted the glories of nature to the life—so that his readers feel the scenes he depicts, as in the following:

THE EARTH IN SPRING.

Then, day by day her broidered gown
She changes for fresh wonder;
A rich profusion of gay robes
She scatters all around her.
From day to day her flowers' tints
Change quick, like eyes that brighten,
Now white, like pearl, now ruby-red,
Now emerald-green they'll lighten.
She turns all pale; from time to time
Red blushes quick o'er cover;
She's like a fair, fond bride that pours
Warm kisses on her lover.
The beauty of her bursting spring
So far exceeds my telling,
Methinks sometimes she pales the stars
That have in heaven their dwelling.

Translated by Edward G. King.

He sent his youthful poems to Moses Ibn Ezra (p. 113) and received this complimentary response:

"How can a boy so young in years
Bear such a weight of wisdom sage?"

He became the greatest Jewish poet of the Middle Ages.

The Poetry of Religion.

His was the poetry that was akin to prophecy: with him the poetic inspiration was indeed a divine afflatus. A deeply religious man, poetry was his means of religious interpretation. As years went on he did not regard poetry as an art for capricious gratification—but a consecration. This particularly applied to the Hebrew tongue that was for him indeed a *lingua sacra* (sacred tongue). So while he wrote both in Arabic and Spanish, Hebrew was the preferable medium of his muse. Through it he gave to every hope of Israel the poetic touch.

Though a physician by profession, this deeply religious nature preceded every prescription with a prayer. This characteristic rather disproved the adage, "Among three physicians will be found two sceptics." Some of his verses seem to breathe that yearning for God that we find in the Psalms, "As the heart panteth after the waterbrook, so my soul yearneth for the living God."

Some Prayer Poems.

O God! before Thee lies my whole desire,
Although it find no utterance on my lips,
Absent from Thee, my very life is death,
But could I cleave to Thee, then death were life.
What share have I in time, except Thy will?

If Thou be not my lot, what lot have I?
Spoiled of all merit, robbed and naked left,
Thy righteousness alone must cover me.
Yet why should I tell out my prayer in words?
O God, before Thee lies mine whole desire.

Translated by Edw. G. King.

O that a dream might hold Him [God] in its bond,
I would not wake: nay sleep should ne'er depart.
Would I might see His face within my heart
Mine eyes would never yearn to look beyond.

Translated by Nina Davis.

Halevi then was essentially the poet of the Synagogue. Some three hundred of his poems are found in the prayer book.

We append an abstract of a translation by Solomon Solis-Cohen of his

SABBATH HYMN.

I greet my love with wine and gladsome lay,
Welcome, thrice welcome, joyous Seventh Day,
Six slaves the week days are; I share
With them a round of toil and care,
Yet light the burdens seem, I bear
For thy sweet sake, Sabbath, my love.

* * *

The fifth day joyful tidings bring.
The morrow shall my freedom bring
At dawn a slave, at eve a king.

Zion.

But while he sang of many themes, he had at heart one—Zion. Zion for him was, indeed, after a rabbinic saying, "The centre of the earth." Here alone was God's message completely revealed. For the land of Israel's past greatness and future hope was with Jehuda Halevi a passion. Israel is God's people and Canaan is God's

land. Zion for him typified the Jew, his past history and his ideals for the future.

LONGING FOR JERUSALEM.

Oh, city of the world, with sacred splendor blest,
My spirit yearns to thee from out the far-off West,
A stream of love wells forth when I recall thy day,
Now is thy temple waste, thy glory passed away.
Had I an eagle's wings, straight would I fly to thee,
Moisten thy holy dust with wet cheeks streaming free.
Oh, how I long for thee! albeit thy king has gone,
Albeit where balm once flowed,the serpent dwells alone.
Could I but kiss thy dust, so would I fain expire,
As sweet as honey then, my passion, my desire!

Translated by Emma Lazarus.

He was, then, an intense Jewish nationalist. He would have hardly understood our modern school that treats Israel's past national era as a temporary stage for the development of its religion. Still less could he accept its conclusions that the loss of Judæa and Israel's dispersion were providential, and that therefore it was not necessary to fast on the anniversary of its overthrow or pray daily for its restoration. On the contrary, he voiced the elegy of Jerusalem's fall as his personal loss. These dirges have been incorporated into the ritual for the 9th of Ab. Some Jews, of his day and ours, may have recited the daily prayer for the restoration of Israel mechanically; not he. Doubtless the wars of the Crusades of his day in which Christian and Moslem fought for the sacred capital of the Jew, but raised his love for Zion to the burning point.

Halevi the Philosopher.

Yet Halevi touched a profounder note in his intellectual nature when he gives us his conception of Judaism.

For this physician and poet was also a philosopher. Both in belief and practice he belonged to the conservative school as distinct from the rationalistic (represented in his day by the Karaites), maintaining the legitimacy of the oral tradition, the authority of rabbinic law. While well read in the Greek philosophers—in their Arabic translation probably—he was not the man to endeavor to reconcile Judaism with Plato or Aristotle. He based his system on the Bible itself.

Choosing the romantic story of the conversion of the Chazars (chap. iii) he presents his religious views in that setting. Hence this work is called the Chozari, (usually written Cusari), and with a subtitle, "Book or Argument and Demonstration in Aid of the Despised Faith." The cleverness of Jehuda's plan is at once apparent: for when the Chazar King Bulan called upon representatives of different religions to express their views, the opportunity was offered our author to express his opinion on each religion and to present the excellence of Judaism by contrast. This plan enabled him, too, to unfold his philosophy not in a dry treatise, but in a lively dialogue recalling Job and Plato.

Of course, he does not write objectively as a cold philosopher, but subjectively, as a believing Jew. What it loses in critical acumen it gains in warmth. We feel his heart beating and to demonstrate religion, that is better than argument. Now for a brief outline of the five essays into which the book is divided. The representative of each cult presents his claim:—

First, the philosopher (of the school of Aristotle): he makes God an unreachable abstraction and leaves the king cold and dissatisfied. Next the Christian: his mystic doctrine of the Trinity appears to King Bulan to be opposed to reason. He finds, however, the third, the

Moslem doctrine of God, more logical, but the divine authority of the Koran seems unsupported by evidence. Now as both the Christian and the Moslem had referred to Judaism as their respective foundations, his confidence at the start was naturally won for that which even by its rivals was acknowledged second to their own.

When the Rabbi, the Jewish representative, comes forward he makes no statement of belief in God's existence. Why? Because this was accepted by all without question. Next, to explain our knowledge of God and His Law, he expounded the doctrine of Revelation. He therefore turns to Scripture where God is made known to the patriarchs and where He redeems Israel from Egypt. To Halevi biblical evidence is unanswerable authority. He therefore wished to bring forward the unbroken Jewish tradition of God's revelation to Moses and the prophets. With this hypothesis he demonstrates that divine revelation as found in Scripture is more reliable than man's unaided reason; hence, the message of the prophet is superior to that of the philosopher who derives his idea of God from unaided reason. Halevi maintained that finite reason alone cannot always discern justice in the world, not seeing the whole of the divine purpose. Having demonstrated the priority of the Jewish tradition to that of the Cross and the Crescent, he next proves the superiority of the Jewish religion by the marvellous redemption of its followers, and by their divine choice from among all people for the reception of the Law. All associations of Israel seem exalted to this passionate advocate. The land of Israel is superior to all lands, the language of Israel (Hebrew) is superior to all tongues and the people of Israel superior to all nations. Hence his oft-quoted adage:

"Israel is among the nations as the heart among the

limbs." If modern Israel believed as deeply in the exalted character of their people, that conviction alone would spur them on to great achievement.

Appreciation of Mosque and Church.

So intensely believing in his own religion—he none the less speaks appreciatively of others as the following will show:

In the course of the argument the question is asked of the Jew: "If yours is the true faith, why have not you attained great worldly triumph, such as have been reached by the Christian and the Moslem, instead of being contemptuously subjected by them?" The Jew answers: "Just as the seed in the earth seems to be changed into soil and water out of all recognition, yet has really changed the earth and water to its own nature, so the law of Moses changes those who come in contact with it, even though it seems to be cast aside by them. Christianity and Mohammedanism are preparations for Israel's Messiah."

The King and his people are now converted to Judaism. But making the rabbi instructor of the nation gives Halevi the opportunity to enter more deeply into the exposition of his Faith in the remaining books, which are briefly outlined in the notes at the close of this chapter.

On the whole, it is the man behind the book that appeals to us rather than the book itself. He was unique. For example, although he obeyed every ceremonial command, and even believed that they were needed for the perfection of the moral life, none the less he imbibed to the full the broad spirit of the prophets. Sometimes we speak of the letter versus the spirit and point to those

who obey every minute precept, but lose sight of the spirit of religion. Jehuda Halevi was one of those rare natures who combined in himself an appreciation of the letter *and* the spirit. These were not contradictories to him. Every precept of the Talmud and every sacrificial law claimed his reverence, yet his soul was thrilled by the glorious teachings of the holy prophets and by their magnificent appeals to righteousness.

Pilgrimage to the East.

This faithful lover of Zion could not at last rest until he himself stood upon its sacred soil. This became the settled purpose of his later years—to spend the close of his life in Palestine. "To die in Jerusalem" was and is the hope of many a Jew. All lands to him were strange, even the land of his birth, though it was a kindly home. "I am in the West, but my heart is in the East."

At no time could it be less propitious; for since the first Crusade (chap. xiii), the Christians had possession of the Holy Land and a Jew entered this home of his ancestors at the peril of his life.

It meant leaving a tolerant country, parting from friends, pupils, his daughter and his grandson. His wife was dead. Yes, like Abraham, he left "land, kindred and father's house to go to the land that God would show."

So the famous pilgrimage began about the year 1140. The sea voyage to Alexandria with accompanying storm again stirred his muse and brought out his answering faith:—

Extract from VOYAGE TO JERUSALEM.

A watery waste the sinful world has grown,
With no dry spot whereon the eye can rest,

No man, no beast, no bird to gaze upon,
Can all be dead, with silent sleep possessed?
Oh, how I long the hills and vales to see,
To find myself on barren steppes were bliss.
I peer about, but nothing greeteth me,
Naught save the ships, the clouds, the waves' abyss,
The crocodile which rushes from the deeps;
The flood foams gray; the whirling waters reel,
Now like its prey whereon at last it sweeps,
The ocean swallows up the vessel's keel,
The billows rage—exult, oh soul of mine,
Soon shalt thou enter the Lord's sacred shrine.

Translated by Emma Lazarus.

A Calm Night at Sea.

And when the sun retires to the mansions of the skies,
Where all the hosts of heaven their general await.
The night comes on, an Ethiop queen, her garment all of gold,
Comes here deck'd with azure and there with pearls ornate.
And the constellations wander through the centre of the sea
Like pilgrims doomed to linger far from all that's consecrate;
Their twinkling forms and figures their likeness reproduce
In ocean's mirror and images of flaming fire create.
The visage of the ocean and of the heavens mingle here
And gather sharp and bright in a pattern complicate.
And the ocean and the firmament commingle in their hue
And form but two oceans that now communicate,
And in the very midst of them my heart another sea contains
With the echoes of its passion—the billows of its fate.

Translated by Joseph Jacobs.

The journey, on the whole, was less of a pilgrimage than a triumph. For in all the great cities, from Spain

to Palestine, Halevi songs were sung and his name honored. In this friendly environment he touched his lyre again with all the old fire; thus Egypt was the home of some of his most exquisite productions.

So, his journey pleasingly prolonged by flattering attentions of admiring friends, he did not reach the Holy Land till the seventh month after his starting.

At the sight of Jerusalem—the city of his dreams—he gave voice to his greatest poem on the home of his fathers. It was practically his swan song. We quote a selection from the translation of Alice Lucas:

ZIONIDE.

The glory of the Lord will ever be
  My sole and perfect light;
No need hast thou, then, to illumine thee,
  Of sun by day, and moon and stars by night.
I would that, where God's spirit was of yore
  Poured out unto thy holy ones, I might
There too my soul outpour!
The house of kings and throne of God wert thou,
  How comes it then that now
Slaves fill the throne where sat thy kings before?

O! who will lead me on
  To seek the spots where, in far distant years,
The angels in their glory dawned upon
  Thy messengers and seers?
O! who will give me wings
  That I may fly away,
And there, at rest from all my wanderings,
  The ruins of my heart among thy ruins lay?
I'll bend my face unto thy soil, and hold
Thy stones as precious gold.

And when in Hebron I have stood beside
  My fathers' tombs, then will I pass in turn
Thy plains and forests wide,
  Until I stand on Gilead and discern

Mount Hor and Mount Abarim, 'neath whose crest
Thy luminaries twain, thy guides and beacons rest.

Thy air is life unto my soul, thy grains
Of dust are myrrh, thy streams with honey flow;
Naked and barefoot, to thy ruined fanes
How gladly would I go;
To where the ark was treasured, and in dim
Recesses dwelt the holy cherubim.

The Lord desires thee for his dwelling place
Eternally; and blest
Is he whom God has chosen for the grace
Within thy courts to rest.
Happy is he that watches, drawing near,
Until he sees thy glorious light arise,
And over whom thy dawn breaks full and clear
Set in the Orient skies.
But happiest he, who, with exultant eyes,
The bliss of thy redeemed ones shall behold,
And see thy youth renewed as in the days of old.

We next trace him to Damascus. We have only tradition to guide us as to his further steps. It is said that just as he was entering Jerusalem, an Arab slew him. Thus he fell at the very gate of Zion and his life went out in a glow of light, a willing martyr to his ideal. So he reaches the gate of Jerusalem as he enters the gate of Heaven. Both were one to him.

Notes and References.

Halevi and Philo:

The philosophic theory of the Neo-Platonists and Philo was that the perfect absolute God could not have directly created the imperfect finite world. The gap between the spiritual God and the material world was bridged by an intermediary emanation or *Logos,* as explained in our last volume. Halevi criticises this and says, very plausibly, even this Logos must be ultimately traced back to the

First Cause (it is only the difference between direct and indirect).

Halevi's Poems:

Zunz divides Halevi's *Divan* (book or collection) into 816 poems, of which he finds 300 in the Liturgy. See Zunz's summary, *Literaturgeschichte der Synagogalen Poesie,* p. 203.

English translations have already been referred to in the body of the chapter.

See Heine's tribute in "Romancero," of which here are a few verses translated by Zangwill:

Ah! he was the greatest poet,
Torch and starlight to his age,
Beacon-light unto his people;
Such a mighty and a wondrous
Pillar of poetic fire,
Led the caravan of sorrow
Of his people Israel
Through the desert of their exile.

Pure and truthful, fair and blameless,
Was his song, and thus his soul was.
When the Lord that soul created,
With great joy His work beheld He,
And he kissed that soul of beauty,
Of His kiss the fair, faint echo
Thrills through each song of Halevi,
By the Lord's grace sanctified.

Remaining Books of the Cusari:

The second book deals with the attributes of God. He defends the use of biblical anthropomorphisms (the speaking of God in a human way), first because they are only used figuratively; secondly, they are helpful in appealing to the imagination and the emotions. Finally the most abstract qualities can only be ascribed to God in a metaphoric way.

In Book III he defends the Oral Law and Talmud as against Karaism, showing his substantial agreement with Saadyah. He also endeavors to show how the symbolism of ceremonial idealizes the daily life of the Jew.

In Book IV he explains the names applied to God and the essences of the angels and contrasts prophecy with philosophy.

In his last book he wrestles with the eternal problem of squaring divine omniscience with human freedom of will. He closes with a criticism of the *Kalam,* i. e., Moslem rationalism. (Note, p. 44.)

Revelation versus Reason:

As against the view of Halevi, we would say today that we may trust our reason and treat the knowledge it gives as a kind of revelation from God.

Theme for Discussion:

Bring out the difference between Jehuda Halevi's love of Zion and the modern movement known as Zionism.

CHAPTER XII.

JEWISH ACHIEVEMENTS IN CHRISTIAN SPAIN.

Political and Social Standing.

If the Spanish Jews of the 12th century had been asked whether they preferred living under the Crescent or the Cross, they might have found it difficult to answer. So very different was the Spanish Christian from his co-religionist elsewhere at this time. In Castile, Aragon, Navarre and Leon, which had all passed from Moorish to Christian sway, the Jew was given no reason to regret the change. For religious liberty and civic privileges were continued under the changed regime.

Forty thousand Jews were in the ranks of Alfonso VI's army at the battle of Zallaka in 1085 (p. 72). The engagement was even delayed on their account till the Sabbath was over. Although some of their own brethren were in the Moorish ranks, on neither side did the Jews permit regard for coreligionists to affect their patriotism. This recalls the loyalty of the great Samuel to the Persian King Shabur (*T. Y.*, 234).

Toledo's twelve thousand Jews possessed beautiful synagogues and some of their sons took rank as knights. Castilian Jews won more renown in poetry and science than in Talmudic law.

Although Alfonso VII showed at first a tendency to curtail the rights of the Jews, he soon followed his father's more liberal example. The learned Joseph Ibn Ezra was high in his favor as court chamberlain and

high in his confidence as guardian of the fortress of Calatrava. The next monarch loaded him with honors and permitted Toledo to become a place of refuge for maltreated Jews.

Leon, Castile and Navarre—all in turn—put such trust in Jewish loyalty as to hand over to them the guardianship of fortresses and towns.

Alfonso VIII, who came to the Castilian throne in 1166, met, for a time, a rebuff at the hands of the vigorous Moorish dynasty, the Almohades, of which we shall hear more later. Yet his liberality to the Jews was unabated and they largely furnished the funds for this war. Their *Nasi,* Joseph ben Solomon, became his treasurer. When finally his triumphant Christian soldiers turned their arms from the Moors to the Jews (a movement quickly quelled) they did not discern here a warning of darker days to come. For when the thirteenth century began their legal status was more assured than ever, safekuarded by royal enactment. Not till Leon became incorporated with Castile did the tide in their favor turn and bigotry begin to show its hand. But we have much to tell before that time arrived.

Benjamin the Explorer.

Let us first turn to *Navarre.* It produced the famous Jewish traveler, Benjamin of Tudela, who traversed Europe, Asia and Africa. It took a brave man to face the perils of travel in those unsettled days. Although a merchant, it was not with the material aim of the profitable exchange of merchandise that he penetrated into unknown lands, but with the pious resolve of finding "the lost ten tribes." Their whereabouts had always been a subject of serious perplexity both to Jews and Christians.

(There came a time when a theory about them strangely affected the fate of Israel, but it was at a far later day.)

Tudela's Hebrew notes on his travels, covering the period from 1160 to 1173, have been worked up into a book by later editors and translated into many tongues. He showed himself a keen observer and looked out upon the world, not only as Jew, but as man. He gives us the state of civilization of the different lands he entered and describes their government. He tells of the beginning of trade and commerce in the large cities as far east as France and as far west as Persia. He tells of the deterioration of the Greeks with their armies of mercenaries and of the steady advance of the Turks into Europe. He describes the republics of Italy, the Byzantine Empire and the status of the Caliphs of Bagdad.

His description of the Jewish communities of Europe and Asia are valuable contributions to our history in the twelfth century. He describes, too, the Karaites and the Samaritans. From him we learn of the exploits of David Alroy, to be told later (chap. xxviii).

Dr. Wilhelm Bacher says of him: "Benjamin of Tudela furnishes important and reliable accounts of the civil occupations of the Jews. . . . Those of Palestine and some other countries extensively practised the art of dyeing. The large Jewish congregation of Thebes in Greece was employed in the manufacture of silk and purple. There were Jewish glassmakers in Antioch and Tyre; in the last-named town also ship owners. Among the Druses of Lebanon, Jewish workmen were domiciled, and in Crissa, at the foot of Parnassus, a large colony of Jewish peasants existed. . . . Benjamin's book, not altogether free from fiction, is preponderatingly marked by sobriety and clearness of narrative."

Chasdai the Translator.

Aragon also produced Jewish scholars, particularly in Barcelona. From that town came Abraham Ibn Chasdai, who lived a century later and was one of the great translators of Arabic works into Hebrew.

His knowledge of languages enabled him to adapt a famous story known as "Barlaam and Josaphat" that was part of the life of Buddha. His Hebrew version was known as "The Prince and the Dervish." This royal prince, in spite of his jealous seclusion, learns of the existence of evil; so renouncing his royal privileges, he goes forth into the world and leads a life of denial and sacrifice.

One of the tales told to the Prince by the Dervish was of an island country that annually chose for its king some stranger shipwrecked on its coast. At the end of the year he was returned to the same spot and in the same condition in which he was found. One more prudent than his predecessors, learning of his ultimate fate, laid up a hidden treasure during his year of office, on which he lived in happiness after his brief rule was over. This one year's reign is earthly life, and the Dervish drew from the picture the obvious moral.

But much is written in a lighter vein. For example:

Go not too frequently thy friends to see,
Lest they grow weary of the sight of thee;
When rain is scanty, then we pray for more,
But love not one continuous downpour.

Let not his humble vesture make thee blind
To one whose greatness is a learned mind:
For pearls may sometimes in the sand be found,
And stores of gold lie buried in the ground.

Be ever meek and humble, nor essay
In path of pride and haughtiness to stray:
The tempest spares the hyssop on the wall,
But 'neath its wrath the proudest cedars fall.

Translated by J. CHOTZNER

Ibn Daud, Scientist and Historian.

Toledo (*Castile*) is to be lastingly remembered in Jewish annals for producing two scholars—the philosopher Ibn Daud and the critic Ibn Ezra.

Of Abraham Ibn Daud, who was born in 1110, we can say—what has become in this narrative almost a monotonous summary of Spanish-Jewish scholars, the average photograph of them all—i. e., he was a Hebraist, a mathematician, an astronomer and a physician. But he won distinction in spheres other than these—first in a field hitherto negelected by Jewish scholars, history. The Jews, who had made so much history, overlooked its systematic study. They did not strongly develop the historic sense.

Ibn Daud does give us a Jewish history, *Sepher Hakabala* (Book of Tradition), that is particularly valuable for the Spanish era and for the earlier period of the Geonim (p. 37).

But philosophy was his forte; he deemed it the subject worthiest to occupy the human mind, leading as it does to a knowledge of God. Some may say "that depends upon the philosopher." So it does. But Ibn Daud, blessed with religious faith, took the same ground as Jehuda Halevi in placing Revelation higher than Reason. Indeed his work is called "Sublime Faith." Perhaps Ibn Daud's answer to those who taught that philosophy undermines faith, might have been that it is the *little* knowledge that is dangerous—to faith as to every-

thing else. He was right in making the claim that whatever might be the attitude of other creeds towards knowledge, Judaism has ever courted light.

He was the first Jewish follower of that renowned Greek philosopher, Aristotle—the world's first scientist.

Ibn Daud reaches God as the necessary First Cause or Prime Mover of the Universe. As such he must be infinite and therefore cannot be corporeal (for bodies have limits). The First Cause must be wholly independent, therefore God must be alone—One. As to God's nature, we can affirm no more than His existence, we can say what He is not rather than what He is.

Ibn Daud's explanation of life's apparent imperfection suggests a line in Pope's "Essay on Man," "All partial evil is universal good."

Just as the Bible makes "the beginning of wisdom the fear of the Lord," so Ibn Daud treated philosophy with reverent touch, making virtue its aim. Opposed to Ibn Gabirol in other respects, he agrees with him here.

In subdividing the duties taught by Judaism, he makes an important discrimination between an ethical and a ceremonial precept. So while he ranks faith in God highest and morality next, he places sacrificial and dietary laws lowest. Yet he recognized the ethical aim of ceremonial law, but not with the insistence and enthusiasm of Jehuda Halevi. Among moral teachings he lays emphasis on duties to the family and the state and on humility, in which he includes forgiveness of enemies and conscientiousness in general.

Ibn Daud died a martyr—slain in an anti-Jewish riot in 1180. He deserves to be classed among the band of immortals whose exalted views of God, Life and Destiny vindicate the dignity of man and give inspiration to noble achievement.

Ibn Ezra, the Savant.

Spain produced many renowned Ibn Ezras—Moses Ibn Ezra, the poet; the four Ibn Ezra brothers, who flourished in Granada; Jehuda Ibn Ezra, the Nasi. But when we mention the surname alone we mean *Abraham Ibn Ezra.*

He was born in Toledo in 1092, six years after Jehuda Halevi, and absorbed all the Jewish culture of Spain. He stood out keenly intellectual, even in this intellectual environment—he was critical, witty, versatile and yet profound. He lacked the exalted earnestness of Ibn Daud and the religious fervor of Jehuda Halevi, yet his influence on Jewish literature was as great as either.

His life suggests strange contrasts. He wrote poems but lacked the poet's temperament. Though a rationalist, he tolerated no deviation from authority in others. He was tinged with mysticism, yet he ridiculed the mystics. An astronomer, he half believed in its counterpart and counterfeit, astrology. His experience was pessimistic, but his belief optimistic. In pointed epigram he was a master. Was not his own life the best epigram of all?

His genius was of the erratic order. He turned from one study to another and his life reflected his changeability of interest. He gives us suggestive notes on many themes rather than exhaustive treatises on few. He traveled from land to land, not with a set purpose like Benjamin of Tudela, but simply because he could not long content himself in one place. Like the proverbial "rolling stone," he barely gathered the means of subsistence. He crossed the Mediterranean into Africa, going to Egypt and the Holy Land and reaching as far as Babylonia. Then he turned from the East to Europe once more, and in Italy exercised the greatest influence of his

life. In Rome he wrote many of his works and succeeded in creating a scholarly revival among his brethren. Indeed, wherever he went he left a literary impression.

It must be remembered that all the great works on the science of Judaism were produced in Mohammedan lands and therefore in the Arabic tongue. While travelling in Christian Europe, where Arabic was not understood by Jews resident there, he wrote his works in Hebrew, so that he was able to spread Jewish culture among them. (His grammar was the first of its kind in Hebrew.) Thus, through his roving spirit he was in a position to render his greatest service.

From Italy he went to England, where he wrote his "Sabbath Epistle." Returning through France, he reached Spain, the fatherland he loved, only in time to die. Ibn Daud, who survived him, calls him "the last of the great men who formed the pride of Spanish Judaism"; but greater men were yet to follow.

Ibn Ezra as Critic.

In all his diverse capacities, as grammarian, mathematician, philosopher, on each of which he left renowned writings, his true motif was the role of critic. His commentary on the Scriptures, particularly of the Pentateuch, is his most valuable and most lasting contribution to Jewish literature. He was the first—not even excluding Saadyah—to treat Scripture exegesis in a thoroughly scientific spirit. He clarified obscure passages by critical analysis instead of further obscuring them by fantastic notions, according to the prevailing practice among both Christian and Jewish theologians. He uses his commentary as a medium to express his philosophic views. He was a

subtle thinker, restricted by the limited scientific knowledge of his time.

Here is a digest of some of his opinions on the questions which most concerned thinkers of his day and throws some light on the mediaeval point of view.

God is known to us only through His works. He is in all things. At one time, Ibn Ezra approached very near to pantheism in saying, "God *is all things.*"

Angels are immovable beings, who none the less carry out the will of God even as light can cast its beams to a distance.

The stars. Like so many mediaeval thinkers, he believes that the stars have souls and influence the affairs of earth, hence the wide vogue of astrology. He erroneously supposes that they are of different elements than those contained in the earth. The heavenly bodies form a "middle world" between the earth and "the heaven of heavens."

Revelation is granted first through nature, second through the intuitions of the heart, and thirdly (revelation proper) through the direct communication of God.

The Bible. Only the spirit of Scripture is divinely inspired, not its actual words—i. e., its sense, not its language. This was daring for the time. He does not deny miracles, but preferably seeks a natural explanation. Next to the Pentateuch in his appreciation, came the Psalms.

He is in accord with Ibn Gabirol in saying that man's greatest *happiness* lies in fullest knowledge of God and also in his belief in the pre-existence of the soul.

He sanely objects to *celibacy* while condemning sensuality. (The Catholic Church has forbidden its priests to marry since the decree of Pope Gregory VII.)

He has not a high opinion of woman and certainly regards her as inferior to man.

He discerns in the *lower animals* instinct and sensibility, but finds mind only in human beings.

Evil. He taught that nothing in creation is absolutely bad. The evil that we find results from man's perverse choice—even then it is always counterbalanced by good.

Prayer. He strongly pleads for short prayers as against long ones and condemns the *payyetanim* (writers of *Piyutim,* prayer-poems, p. 28) for couching them in obscure diction. Prayer for him must be both brief and simple.

The Future. The fate of the wicked after death is not hell, but oblivion, the soul unworthy to perpetuate itself. The future life of the good is wholly spiritual and exalted.

Notes and References.

Ibn Ezra:

The following is a characteristic introduction to his commentary on the Book of Ecclesiastes:

"Hear pleasant words, written by Abraham, the scribe, for intelligent readers.

"He is called the son of Meir, surnamed Ben Ezra, and from his Rock his soul seeketh help (*Ezra*—help).

"To illumine him in darkness, to cause his way to prosper, for hitherto his has been as a withered leaf.

"He roved far away from his native land, from Spain, and went to Rome with a troubled soul.

"And here he intendeth to expound the Scriptures, and he prayeth to the Almighty, in whom alone is his hope.

"To increase his strength, grant him wisdom and pardon any of his shortcomings in the commentary on Ecclesiastes."

Biblical Criticism:

As Bible critic Ibn Ezra was much in advance of his time. In his day and long afterwards all accepted the

tradition that Moses wrote the first five Bible books. Ibn Ezra points out phrases that must have been written after his day. He discerns, too, that all the sixty-six chapters of Isaiah are not by one author—that there were two Isaiahs. But he conveys all this information in very guarded language.

For those who would like to obtain a closer insight into Ibn Ezra's intellectual make-up, we recommend "Ibn Ezra Literature," Dr. M. Friedlander, particularly the *Essays on Ibn Ezra,* London, Scribner & Co., from which these summaries have been made.

For a complete list of his works and translations extant, see *Jewish Encyclopedia,* vol. vi.

Some of his poems have been translated by Alice Lucas —see *The Jewish Year,* Macmillan.

Plato v. Aristotle:

As Jewish thought centered around the two schools, of Plato and Aristotle, an explanatory word of contrast is here added. Plato gives us an idealistic, Aristotle a realistic view of things. While Plato argued from ideas to things—*deduction,* Aristotle argued from known things and phenomena to general concepts—*induction.* As a further distinction, the philosophy of Aristotle had a more universal scope, covering all knowledge. Finally, Aristotle appeals to our reason, he was essentially the rationalist. Plato appeals to our emotions, he was something of a mystic.

Ibn Daud:

More will be said of Aristotle when Maimonides is reached. He accepted many of Ibn Daud's conclusions; among others, that prophecy is the highest stage of reason. Ibn Ezra shares something of this view also.

Jewish Travelers

When Jews of the Middle Ages traveled voluntarily and were not forced into exile, their motives were either material (to follow the route of trade as merchant) or ideal, to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land as devotees. Sometimes the student traveled to other lands to

sit at the feet of a scholar. Only a few wandered then to see other lands and other people; for the means of safe and swift transportation is man's most modern achievement.

Indeed, the right to leave one's home was severely restricted and heavily taxed. Crossing each bridge meant a toll. Furthermore, no Jew could go abroad without the consent of the congregation, whose burdens, while at home, he shared. On the other hand, to be hospitable to travelers was a pious act especially mentioned in the Prayer Book.

Mediæval travel was beset with diverse dangers—shipwreck, robbery, or seizure of one's person to be sold as a slave. Rich dress excited the cupidity of those one met on the way. For obvious reasons the Jew found it wise to keep his racial identity undisclosed. Sometimes the traveler was discouraged, bringing new cares on the community; at times welcomed, bringing wares and books and accounts of other Jewish settlements. The traveler told stories of strange sights and bold adventures where truth was tinged with romance. Some, made linguists by their travels, were enabled to translate scientific books. They transported famous stories from land to land.

The best known Jewish travelers were Berachya, Charisi, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Ibn Chasdai and Benjamin of Tudela.

As to the last, there is marked distinction between his reports of what he saw and what he heard. For example: He saw two copper pillars in Rome. He *heard* that they had been constructed by King Solomon and that they perspired annually on the 9th of Ab.

Theme for Discussion:

Someone has said that everyone is either a Platonist or an Aristotelian, the average Jew being the latter.

BOOK III.

IN CHRISTIAN EUROPE

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Roman Empire.	Jewish Contemporaries and Events.	England.
	Turks Acquire Syria and Palestine....1065	William the Conqueror 1066
Pope Gregory VII Hildebrand) 1073	Ibn Ezra, b.....1092	William Rufus 1087
First Crusade 1096	Crusade Persecution 1099	Henry I 1100
	Rashi, d.....1105	
Emperor Conrad III 1138	Abraham Ibn Daud 1110	
Second Crusade....1146	Maimonides, b.....1135	Stephen 1135
Emperor Frederick Barbarossa 1152	R. Tam's Synod...1148	First Blood Accusation (Ritual Murder) 1144
	Samuel Ibn Tibbon.1150	Henry II, Plantagenet 1154
	David Kimchi.....1160	
Third Crusade 1189	Benjamin of Tudela begins travels 1160	
Pope Innocent III 1198	Philip Augustus of France pillages and exiles Jews.1182	
Emperor Frederick II 1212	Sueskind, Minnesinger, about.....1190	Richard Coeur de Leon 1189
Francis d'Assisi, fl.1200		York Castle Massacre 1190
Fourth Lateran Council 1215		John 1199
		Magna Charta.....1215
Fourth Crusade....1228		Henry III.....1216
Massacre of Albigenses 1228	Jewish badge 1215	
	Synod of Mayence.1223	
Emperor Rudolph of Hapsburg 1273	Jews suffer for Hugh's Death, Blood Accusation.1255	Hugh of Lincoln slain (second Blood Accusation.1255
Scholastics:— Thomas Aquinas, d. 1274		
Albertus Magnus, d. 1280	Meyer of Rothenberg, fl.....1280	Edward I.....1272
		Expulsion of Jews from England ...1290

THE MINNESINGER SUESSKIND VON TRIMBERG

BOOK II. IN CHRISTIAN EUROPE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CRUSADES

As we turn from Spain to the rest of Europe, it is like coming from a balmy to a bleak atmosphere. Here the Middle Ages are the Dark Ages—ignorant, superstitious, bigoted, savage.

We have seen the Christian armies kept busy in resisting the "infidel"—checking the Mohammedan advance into Europe. Christianity had become so strongly entrenched that by the eleventh century it was able to conduct this conflict of centuries not only as the defensive but as the offensive foe.

Pious Pilgrimages.

It was regarded a duty by pious Christians to make pilgrimages to the tomb of their Savior, Jesus of Nazareth, in Jerusalem. A pilgrimage was a natural and popular expression of religion, and is found among all creeds. Nor were the Christian pilgrims who came to Jerusalem interfered with by the liberal Moslems, who permitted them to build there a church and a hospital. But when the Seljuk Turks, barbarians with a mere veneer of Mohammedanism, in 1065 acquired Syria, including Palestine, they made it hard for the pilgrims. Many returned with burning tales of woe and outrage—fomenting the fanaticism of the masses against the Turks.

The First Crusade.

The culmination came in 1096, when Peter the Hermit, with the sanction of Pope Urban II, stirred all Christendom with a flaming appeal to rescue the Savior's tomb from the hand of the infidel. Like fire the contagion spread through England, France and Germany, and armies were enrolled to march to Jerusalem with different colored crosses on their banners—hence the name given these holy wars—*Crusades* (crux—cross).

The summons appealed to the lawless as well as to the pious, since the Pope offered to all who volunteered under the cross absolution from their sins and remission of their debts. A Latin proverb runs, "*Corruptio optimi pessima*" — "the degeneration of the best becomes the worst." It was, alas, exemplified in these expeditions, which roused the religious enthusiasm of some, but also the base passions of others.

Then, too, the worthiest causes may have unworthy adherents. Some of the scum of Europe enrolled under the crusade banner and saw in it only an opportunity for plunder and rapine.

So it is a very "mixed multitude" that in the year 1096 we see moving towards Palestine with women and even children among their number. Many had but an obscure notion either of the purpose or the destination. A goose was carried in the van, as advance herald, with the delusion that it would lead them to Palestine! What wonder that this first contingent should meet overwhelming defeat! A sorry few returned.

Peter the Hermit, so brave of words, was the earliest cowardly deserter.

But these were followed by a more orderly, organized campaign— the better classes gathered from the feudal

estates of Europe—six armies of about a hundred thousand each.

Jewish Victims in Germany.

Well might the Jews tremble with foreboding when they saw the advancing crusaders. Had not Godfrey of Bouillon, one of the generals, declared that he would avenge the blood of Jesus on the Jews!

So, with Jerusalem in the hazy distance, the word soon passed through this French and German rabble, "Why seek the infidel Turk afar; here is the infidel Jew at hand?"

It was at the Rhine district that the savage army, having tasted blood, let loose the passions of bigotry, avarice and lust. The Jewish quarters were surrounded. Houses and property were destroyed. Maidens threw themselves in the Moselle to escape worse horrors. The bishop often had civil jurisdiction, a kind of local governor. So the Jews appealed to the bishop of Treves. He refused protection unless they submitted to baptism. With the howling mob steadily gaining on them, some in desperation decided to recite the baptismal formula. At such tragic moments of life, with helpless children clinging at their feet, it is hard to tell which way duty points. In some instances the women were more heroic than the men, their courageous conscientiousness deciding for martyrdom. In Speyer, with the alternative of baptism or death before them, many chose death, men and women both. Here, however, the humane bishop, Johannsen, regarding this hounded people not as outcast heretics, but as suffering humanity, took them under his protection and even executed some of the marauders.

In Worms nearly the whole community were slain with the declaration of the *Shema* on their lips, volun-

tarily choosing death rather than renounce Judaism. The memory of the eight hundred martyrs was annually cherished by the Jews who later settled there.

In Mayence the archbishop and the two crusade leaders, Counts Enricho and Emmerich, decoyed thirteen hundred persons into the palace and slaughtered them—the wavering bishop yielding and sharing the plunder.

In Cologne the Jews were protected in the homes of the kinder burghers. Here, too, the bishop, Hermann III, following the noble example of his colleague of Speyer, went so far as to convey the Jews secretly to hiding places outside the city. Ultimately the mob discovered them—so all perished by the sword, except those left to die by exposure to the elements.

Pillage, massacre and forced conversion, begun at Metz, went merrily on in Neuss, Ratisbon, Altenahr, Xanten, Regensburg, Magdeburg and also throughout Bohemia. In the Rhine district about four thousand are said to have lost their lives.

In the following year, 1097, reason returned somewhat. Many were indignant at the atrocities. The emperor, Henry IV, in spite of the Pope's protest, permitted the forced converts to return to the Jewish fold, and even exacted from the people of Mayence an oath that they would not illtreat them. Some even regarded the news, that the crusaders had perished by the way, as deserved punishment.

Jerusalem Taken.

But not all the crusaders perished. Some of the armies reached Jerusalem and took it in 1099. They celebrated the conquest by the slaughter of Mohammedans and the burning of Jews. Three Latin kingdoms were now established in Palestine—at Jerusalem, Edessa

and Antioch, which lasted half a century. At Jerusalem were established the two famous religious orders, the Knights Hospitalers and the Knights Templars.

The social status of the Jews in Christendom was now more precarious than ever. The crusade deepened their sense of isolation and broadened the chasm between them and a hostile world. They drew the cloak of their faith still more closely about them and waited with martyr patience for "the salvation of the Lord." They found it in the study of the Law.

With what strange irony they must have regarded this conflict between Christian and Moslem, for their own ancestral home—which was sacred to these two creeds only through the sanctity the Jew had given to it! To this conflict none the less he was not presumed to belong, yet he became its greatest sufferer.

Second Crusade.

It was about fifty years later that the second crusade was launched (1146). The Jews had been looking for the advent of the Messiah. The Messiah did not come; the crusaders did. Remission of all debts to Jews was proposed by the Pope to all who embarked in the holy war. If only they had been deprived of their property, well might they have chanted, *"Dayenu"* (we are content).

Losing some of their Eastern conquests, two avenging armies of crusaders were mobilized under the direction of the French king and the German emperor, with over a million men. Again it was made the excuse for Jewish pillage. Abbot Peter of France and Monk Rudolph of Germany preached and circulated bitter calumnies against the Jews in order to work up the masses into a fanatic temper.

Bernhard of Clairvaux.

Had not the Emperor Conrad III shown himself more of a man than the Pope, it would have gone hard with Jewry of Germany. But the virtual hero of this crusade was really the man who preached it—Bernhard of Clairvaux. He alone was able to draw the line between veneration of the tomb of the Savior and hatred of those who did not accept him as Messiah. This distinction he tried to preach to the masses.

So when the crusaders began their pilgrimage with the slaughter of harmless Jews, the righteous indignation of this greatest soul in Christendom was aroused. His voice and his pen were at their service. Rudolph he stigmatized as an outlaw and drove him from the scene. But though he traveled to Germany to plead for the Jews, he failed to make clear the moral distinction between killing Turks and killing Jews. Perhaps there was none. But the Turks held the coveted soil and had legions to protect it and themselves; contest with them was war—but attack on the Jews, peaceable and unarmed, was massacre.

So Jewish slaughter went on unabated at Wurtzberg in spite of the protest of its bishop and of Bernhard. Jews were expelled from Magdeburg and Halle. In Carenton (France) they made a fortress of a house and defended themselves to the last man. At Rameru the mob attacked the congregation while worshiping on the Festival of Pentecost and almost killed the famous Rabbi Jacob Tam. Fortunately a knight intervened and saved the man, whose commentary on the Talmud made him a great European authority and who was one of the early *Tosafists* (see note).

Though the good Bernhard stopped all further slaugh-

ter in France, his power did not reach as far as Bohemia to stay the marauder's hand.

For Christendom, the second crusade ended in total failure, owing partly to treachery within its own ranks. Only a small remnant of its vast army returned.

Another Synod.

Its ravages in Jewry strengthened the fraternal bond. They were made to feel that "all Israel are brethren," because none else were such to them. At the call of Rabenu Tam, there assembled another synod to solve the religious and civil problems growing out of these troublous times. Organized action was needed, and it was vitally important that all Israel should present a united front, when treated like "the Ishmaels and Hagars of mankind" with nearly "every man's hand raised against them."

So one of the main purposes of such synods, called from time to time, was to strengthen the Jewish *esprit de corps*. It laid great insistence on the duty of Jews settling their disputes *among themselves*. The threat of excommunication was held over those who appealed, except under compulsion, to outside secular courts against their own brethren. Most severe were their denunciations against "informers." For such traitors wrought incalculable woe to their much-harassed brethren.

The Remaining Crusades.

We will briefly summarize the remaining crusades:

The third Crusade (1189) had the most romantic interest of all for the striking characters, Saladin, the chivalric Saracen, and Richard Cœur de Lion, king of England, were pitted against each other—while the

famous Frederick Barbarossa of Germany and the infamous Philip Augustus of France participated. So its setting is a favorite theme for the novelist from Scott to Lessing.

As to its results, while Jerusalem remained in Moslem hands, the right of Christian pilgrims to visit it without taxation was granted. It was like its predecessors in so far that this crusade began with a preliminary massacre of Jews, which will be told in a chapter on England.

From this time on, crusading became a feature of the intriguing policies of ambitious popes—a card they could always play to rearrange a political situation. So Pope Innocent III planned another in 1203. It was successful and Christendom held Eastern sway for another half century, when it was lost again.

In a fifth Crusade, Emperor Frederick II of Germany, in 1228, once more won back Jerusalem.

Losing it yet again, a sixth crusade was preached by Gregory IX. Louis IX of France was the central figure of this crusade, in which he won nothing but glory. To the Jews it meant an attack upon their French communities. On a few baptism was forced, but the majority were trampled to death, their homes looted and burnt. Some three thousand coreligionists lost their lives.

Edward I of England was successful in the seventh and last Crusade. But before the close of the thirteenth century all Palestine drifted back into Moslem hands. In Moslem hands it remains to-day. The Jews had been the first victims of this movement, and they were the last.

Some Good Results.

Cruel and desolating though the Crusades were, a colossal tragic blunder, yet Providence, "shaping our

ends," ever turneth evil into good. It brought many Christians in contact with Mohammedans to find they were not monsters, but much like themselves. In so far its influence was humanizing. Still in its dark ages, Europe, through the Crusades, got the benefit of contact with the Orient's higher civilization. This meeting of East and West broadened minds and fostered commerce. Thus even the Jews to whom the crusades had brought unmixed evil ultimately enjoyed the salutary benefits of their remoter consequences. They lost the monopoly of trade, but trade in turn lost its stigma. For when it became legitimate and respectable, the Jews had to encounter new restrictions. Still the world moved on to larger light.

Notes and References.

Turn to the map of Europe in front of the book for the route taken by the crusaders.

Read "Bernhard of Clairvaux," article by Frederick Harrison, in *Choice of Books*.

Nearly two million lives are said to have been sacrificed in the crusades.

Third Crusade:

Read Lessing's "Nathan der Weise" and Walter Scott's "The Talisman."

Tosafist

From the Hebrew verb, "to add," was applied to those rabbis after the period of the Geonim, who derived from the Talmud additional law to meet the religious needs of occidental environment. All knotty questions were referred to them and they revealed great ingenuity in their interpretations. The giving of authoritative answers (*Responsa*) on Jewish practice became the main function of later mediæval rabbis.

Theme for Discussion:

Pilgrimages in Judaism. Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles are called "The Three Festivals of Pilgrimage."

THE RASHI CHAPEL AT WORMS

CHAPTER XIV.

RASHI AND HIS TIMES.

Let us now retrace our steps from the days of the last crusade to the period just before the first. Times were quieter then. For even outside the Peninsula there were sheltered spots and moments. Let us look into the life and days of Rashi, the great French master.

While Spain had established some rabbinic schools, which had produced legalists of no mean repute, still, in the specific realm of Jewish law, she never attained greatness. The real successors of the Babylonian schools of Sora and Pumbeditha were France and Germany. It was France that gave birth to one of the greatest of our commentators.

Rabbi Shalomo Yitzchaki, better known by his initials, Ra-sh-i, was born in Troyes, capital of the French Champagne, in 1040, a dozen years after the death of Rabenu Gershom and just about the time when the Babylonian schools were closing.

In his youth, Troyes offered little opportunity for Hebrew education, and to obtain it he had to travel to Mayence and Worms. Like Hillel and Akiba, of old, he found that privation was the price of knowledge: occasionally he lacked the elemental necessities—clothing and food.

Through that discipline has passed many a hero-scholar since his day.

Education in France and Germany.

What did he learn at Mayence and elsewhere? Not all with which tradition once credited him. We must bear in mind the times and the surroundings. Spain, the sole centre of European culture, was the only land that trained its sons in natural science or philosophy and made physicians of its rabbis. The Jews of Rashi's day and to a greater degree their Christian contemporaries, lacked what we would call general culture; they had vague notions of history and geography, and knew not the classic tongues, Greek and Latin. Their ideas of religion were naive and not entirely free from superstition. Many believed that all science was contained within rabbinic literature. Be it not forgotten that outside the Peninsula prevailed the Dark Ages.

But within the limitations of his environment Rashi was a great scholar. He read practically all that was extant on the subject of Jewish law except what lay hidden from him in the Arabic tongue.

He returned to Troyes master of all rabbinic literature. When fitness placed him as the spiritual head of this community, he would not use the law as "a spade to dig with." He followed the time-honored precedent of making teaching a labor of love. Though, like Bachya (p. 84), a judge (Dayan), unofficial rabbi and "scribe," he earned his living as a distiller of wine. His mind was rich, but his fare was frugal. Here was "plain living and high thinking." Rashi, like many of the rabbis of the olden time, was a saint indeed, lacking only the title.

Rashi's Commentary on the Talmud.

A genius is soon discovered, and a genius in Talmudic and Biblical exposition Rashi certainly was. In the "sea of the Talmud" Rashi looms forth as the great clarifier, and in its study he made a new epoch. He gave the best years of his life in writing a commentary upon it. He began with a revision of the text by a comparison of the different manuscripts extant, for errors crept into books more commonly than not, in ante-printing days.

Without this commentary (which since the year 1520 has always been printed with the Babylonian Talmud as part and parcel of it) it would almost be a sealed book. It supplanted all previous expositions, the best of which Rashi doubtless absorbed.

Rashi's commentary became, from his day, the standard interpretation and his text the standard text. His commentary is chiefly concerned with explaining the language, the grammatical forms and here and there the general thought. He further introduced additional information on the laws contained in the Talmud and on its teachers. In his style Rashi is a model commentator; though thorough, he is yet simple and terse. He had the gift of condensed expression.

Rashi's Commentary on the Bible.

While his commentary on the Talmud is his great achievement, his commentary on the Bible is more famous in a way. There is more of himself in it. His exposition on the Talmud was for the students; that on the Bible was for the masses. It has given religious stimulus to whole communities. Rashi's Pentateuch particularly became a text-book for youth. It comprised both an expo-

sition of the grammatical construction of the words and an explanation of the text as he understood it. It is true that Spain was the home of the science of grammar, but some of its teachings reached France even in Rashi's day. Here and there his commentary consists of the translation of difficult and doubtful words into French, his vernacular; showing that the Jews of his day spoke the language of the country. His commentary contains more than two thousand words in the French of the time of the crusades.

His interpretation of the Bible is, on the whole, rational and simple. He usually sought the plain meaning of the text, *p'shat,* as it is called. This was the more remarkable in an age that looked for mystic interpretation rather than for the obvious meaning. (This was even truer of Christian exegesis of that day than of Jewish.) Not that his exposition is entirely free from the fanciful and fantastic, such as we at times find in the Midrash. There is much of this. But even where his reverence for tradition led him to introduce some of its theories, he did so with misgiving. In his old age he seriously considered a revision of his commentary on more rational lines. As it is, we must not be surprised to find references to the "evil eye" and to see post-biblical history and Talmudic law strangely interwoven in the stories of the patriarchs.

But it has remained the most popular exposition of the Bible in spite of later ones showing riper learning. Ibn Ezra's never superseded it. Commentaries have been written on his commentary. Christian humanists have translated it into Latin. Luther's Bible translation, so largely responsible for the Reformation, was greatly indebted to Rashi's exposition. (See *Modern Jewish History,* p. 24.)

INTERIOR OF SYNAGOGUE AT WORMS

Rashi's Method of Interpretation.

Let it be understood that Rashi's commentaries are not general surveys of the works he expounds, but specific exposition of the text. He comments on a verse rather than on a chapter, and on a word rather than on a verse. Broad surveys of Scripture and Talmud were to be the tasks of later hands. For their complete understanding we need both—the general and the minute exposition. (See note.) Both his commentaries are remarkable for conciseness. He never wastes a word.

This microscopic study of the Bible that never missed the slightest variation of its word forms, made the Jews of the eleventh century the most complete masters of Scripture of their day.

The Talmud for Rashi carried complete religious authority: it was for him a work without error or limitation. He *explains* the text, he does not venture to criticize it. Let us realize that for that age the Bible and the Talmud included the whole of its intellectual as well as its religious life, in a more complete sense than they do to-day in this era of many books, of new fields of thought and discovery, of new arts and sciences, and new interests generally. Nor was the Talmud studied then as many study it to-day, as a literature or to obtain the impression of the civilization and atmosphere, the beliefs about the world and the theories of life of the age in which it was written. It was studied wholly for its explanation of civil and ritual law.

Rashi's Influence.

Emerson said that "when a man does better work than those of his kind, though he build his house in the depths of the forest, men will make a path to his door."

Rashi made Troyes a centre whence "went forth the Law." Verily an academy is not a building but a man. Soon the French schools came to surpass those of the Rhine. He gave an impetus to Jewish learning and widened the circle of scholars.

His influence was partly due to his character. He was esteemed for his learning, but he was loved for his gentleness and benevolence. Nor can we always separate scholarship from character. There is a conscientiousness peculiar to the scholar. Rashi possessed it in high degree. He is always honest with his readers as to his sources and his doubts. So we are prepared for the picture given us of his students hovering around him with loving awe. He used his influence to promote peace and good-will in Israel; a Hillel in his way. We see him chivalrous in defense of maid or wife against faithless lover or harsh husband.

Rashi's *Responsa* form a not unimportant part of his writings and were elaborated into separate works by his disciples. His counsel was sought for at a distance and his word carried throughout France and was accepted as law. For he was not only consulted on academic questions, but on the practical religious issues of life. Thus his correspondence reveals the life of his times.

Jew and Gentile.

He is broad enough to discriminate between heathen and Christian, refusing to apply Talmudic law touching the former against the latter. He realized the necessity of Jews trading with Christians among whom they now lived interspersed.

But those rough times hardly encouraged an *entente cordiale* though his *Responsa* suggest an approach toward

it. Jew and Christian looked upon one another with suspicious hostility, even before the first crusade. But when Peter the Hermit had carried his message of frenzy through Europe—and the libertine, the adventurer and the robber used the cloak of religion to sanction spoliation, fanaticism ran riot; then came the rupture. The first crusade occurred during the last years of Rashi's life; perhaps it hastened his death. When the Emperor Henry IV permitted those Jews converted under the crusader's sword to return to their faith, some of the severer brethren would not receive them. Rashi rebuked this severity. "Reject them not," nor were they to be reproached. (Compare similar attitude of Rabenu Gershom, p. 55.) He even approved accepting the testimony of those who had become apostates under duress.

In 1105 Rashi passed away. The legends that grew around his name testify to the reverence with which he was regarded. Fables do not cluster about the memory of commonplace people. His fame went through Europe and reached the East. A bench is still preserved in Worms, where sat—so says tradition—the illustrious scholar, his pupils grouped about him, many of whom were members of his own family.

Greatness is further indicated when a man's influence persists after his death. Rashi most lived after he had passed away. His pupils became a school and the founders of schools. He shaped the character of Jews and Judaism in France and Germany for many centuries after his day.

Notes and References.

Rashi and the Mishna:

Just as Rashi's commentary absorbed many of those of previous teachers, so it will be recalled, Jehuda Ha-Nasi

summarized compilations of Jewish Law already in existence (*T. Y.*, p. 222). This procedure adds to the value of both works.

Higher Criticism:

This term, often misunderstood, means a comprehensive survey of the work as a whole, its style, age, authorship, and comparative treatment. It is distinct from "lower criticism," which is a scrutiny of the text. Rashi's comments were of the latter class.

Rashi's Commentaries:

In the Rashi commentaries, a few of the Talmudic treatises and a few of the Bible books are not from Rashi's hand.

For some actual examples of Rashi's commentaries, the reader is referred to the work on *Rashi,* by Maurice Liber (J. P. S. of A.), chaps. vi and vii. This book as a whole is recommended to those who would like to know more of the subject. See, too, in the appendix, Rashi's genealogy.

In German, Zunz's article is famous: "Solomon b. Isaac genannt Rashi" contained in *Zeitschrift fur die Wissenschaft des Judenthums.* Erster Band pp. 277-385.

Theme for Discussion:

Compare the study of the Talmud as literature with its study as a code of Jewish law.

CHAPTER XV.

FRANCE, NORTH AND SOUTH: A CONTRAST.

Origin of the French Kingdom.

Now for a fuller word about the land of Rashi. We saw France gradually break away from the Frankish emperor to become a separate kingdom (similar to the process known as "fission" among the lowest organisms, which increase by each subdividing into two). The new country opened with the royal house established by Hugh Capet about the year 1000. Not that the early kings had much power. Some of the nobles and some of the bishops (as we saw at the time of the Crusades) were almost as strong. The lack of a powerful central government made life and property insecure. That which made life hard for the general public always made it harder for the Jews. The caprice of a noble could at once deprive them of fields, vineyards and mines, which we find them acquiring quite early. While a bigoted word of a powerful bishop was sufficient to turn all the superstitious populace against them.

Yet there were wide distinctions of social and political status. The France of Rashi's days and for three centuries after was not one country. Part of the North belonged to England, including Normandy, Bretagne, Anjou, Touraine, Maine, Guienne, Poitou and Gascony. The rest was broken up into baronies of which the French king ruled but one, though nominal lord over all. Each had a separate history and one was even Spanish.

Broadly speaking, we note a marked difference between Northern and Southern France. The North was narrow in its outlook and bigoted in its religion. The South, more particularly Provence or Languedoc, bordering on the Pyrenees, evinced broad culture and religious enlightenment.

Strange and yet not strange—the Jews of North and South partook of their same respective characteristics. Those of the North, like those of Germany on which they bordered, limited their religious and intellectual activity to Talmudic study and the interpretation of its law. Those of the South were more akin to the Spanish Peninsula on which they bordered and produced linguists, critics and philosophers.

Southern France.

The Christians of Provence, styled Provencals, were quite a class in themselves. On the one hand, they yielded no blind submission to the Catholic Church and declined to accept the authority of the Pope. So they were regarded as heretics, and came to be known from one of their towns—Albi—as *Albigenses*. But the Church bided its time. We are then not surprised that they looked kindly on their Jewish neighbors and appreciatively on their religion. Some Jews were entrusted wth police and judicial powers.

The cultured Provencal Jews of the twelfth century naturally turned to Spain rather than to Germany for their teachers. They were a model community, moral, hospitable, benevolent and loyal. Some were merchants, some farmers, and fortune smiled upon them all. What a pity that such a community or their estimable Albigensian neighbors should be disturbed!

The chief Jewish centres were Narbonne, Beziers, Montpelier, Lunel, Posquieres and Beaucaire. We cannot mention all their distinguished scholars, but must confine ourselves to the two great scholarly families, the Kimchis, grammarians, and the Tibbons, translators.

The Kimchis.

Joseph Kimchi, who flourished in the twelfth century in Narbonne was largely instrumental in bringing Spanish culture to the Provence. He anticipated Ibn Ezra in transplanting Judæo-Arabic science into Christian Europe. He has left behind him a Hebrew grammar, some commentaries and some poems.

But the great Kimchi was his son David. Through his Bible dictionary and his grammar, he taught Hebrew both to the Jews and Christians of Europe. It is true he only absorbed the results of the pioneer grammarians, Ibn Janach and Ibn Ezra, as he himself frankly acknowledged. But he presented their results in so popular a form and in so systematic a classification as really to supersede them. At times the world is as much indebted to the popularizer of a truth as to its originator. As widely read also and prized were his philosophic and rational commentaries on Scripture. These were rendered into Latin and aided Bible translators of a later day.

The Tibbons.

Lunel produced the Tibbons. Judah Ibn Tibbon, born 1120, was a physician by vocation and a linguist by avocation. He is styled "the father of translators." In addition to independent works, he translated from Arabic into Hebrew Saadyah's "Faith and Knowledge,"

Bachya's "Duties of the Heart," Gabirol's "Ethics" and "Necklace of Pearls," Jehuda Halevi's "Chosari," and Ibi Janach's Grammar and Dictionary. All these works have been considered in preceding chapters.

His son, Samuel Tibbon, was a keener scholar than his father. He wrote learned commentaries on Scripture. He translated Aristotle (not from the original Greek but from the Arabic translation) into Hebrew. His greatest contribution to the spread of Jewish learning was the translation into Hebrew of Maimonides' "Guide to the Perplexed." Both of the man and the book we have yet to tell.

Through these translations and those of less famous Tibbons, important works became familiar to Jews throughout the world. Most of them are known to-day—not by their Arabic but by their Hebrew names.

Still the Provence produced no striking and original thinkers. It is significant that the founders of the two families that made it famous—Kimchi and Tibbon—came from Spain.

Northern France.

Northern France exhibits a contrast both in literary culture and social status. Here the Jews suffered during the second Crusade. Still outside of that they were fairly secure as times went. Indeed the Crown was kinder than the Church and Louis VII refused to deny Christian servants to Jews in spite of the decree of the third Lateran Council in 1179. But this was but a brief gleam of sunshine. Storm clouds came with King Philip Augustus.

The same avaricious spirit that urged Philip Augustus to bring the rich lands of the barons more directly under

his sway prompted him to despoil wealthy Jews. His pretext for this spoliation was that they were usurers and slew Christians to use their blood for the manufacture of Passover bread! We shall see this slanderous charge utilized by wicked men all through their history.

Because the Jews demanded the execution of a Christian murderer in Bray-on-Seine, Philip Augustus ordered a hundred of them burnt. The bulk of the community committed suicide to escape a worse fate at the hands of the fanatic populace. Ah, 'twas a dangerous thing then for Jews to demand justice.

Jews Robbed and Banished.

But he did not stop there. One day in the year 1180 the synagogue service was rudely interrupted by the sacrilegious entrance of his minions demanding money. The Jews on the king's immediate territory were mulcted for 1300 silver marks, while Christians were absolved from debts to Jews on the payment of one-fifth the amount to the king! What shameless robbery given the sanction of royal decree. Next he seized their landed property. Then having stripped them bare this French Pharoah banished them from his dominions. The alternative of baptism was offered to give the heartless conduct a religious tinge. But the exiles found hospitable refuge in neighboring baronies.

Other Persecutions.

Those whom king and people spared in Northern France were pillaged by the marauders of the third and fourth Crusades.

Yet the crafty king who cared more for lucre than for the Cross soon invited the Jews back, having discovered

them to be a source of revenue. So the next step was instead of banishing the Jews, to *forbid them to leave*—exile was exchanged for captivity. *Galuth* is the Hebrew translation of both. The next device to exploit the Jews was to encourage them to lend money to the people at usurious rates approved by the monarch, from which king and barons were to receive a large percentage. This enforced calling, while it enriched the nobility, impoverished the people and deepened their hatred of the Jews; for they did not see the real usurers in the background.

This anomalous position between the upper and nether millstone must have warped their character while making hazardous their lives. Such an environment was of course inimical to culture or scholarship. Northern France only produced *Tosafists* (note, p. 129), of whom we may mention Rashi's grandson Isaac and Judah Sir Leon of Paris. Even the Talmud was expounded narrowly. It was an era of superstition in which hostility without deepened the mental gloom within.

Note.

Latin:

As an added reason why Jews in Christian lands were for the most part ignorant of scientific training, it has been pointed out by Zunz that such works in scientific and general culture as did exist, and they were few, were in Latin. This was the language of the priest and the Church. Not unnaturally the Jews were averse to its study.

Theme for Discussion:

Some famous works better known in their translation than in their original tongues.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ZENITH OF POPISH POWER.

Pope and Emperor.

We must say further a word about the Christian world in which the Jews were living in sufferance, for, to understand their life we should know their environment. The complete subjugation of all the nations in Christendom had been the aim of the early popes from Leo III, who crowned Charlemagne, as told in the opening chapter. It now came near realization with Gregory VII (1073), who instituted the celibacy of the clergy, so that as unmarried, they should have no interest outside of the Church. He also exempted them from secular authority, that their power should be more unrestrained, and he withdrew Church property from secular control.

This determined man forced the Emperor Henry IV, who had angered him, to come to him in Italy as a suppliant. In midwinter the humiliated monarch was compelled to remain barefoot and otherwise clothed in but the haircloth shirt of a penitent, outside the castle gates of Canossa, before the tyrant pontiff would consent to remove the ban of excommunication. This was in 1077. The Crusades brought increased prestige, for kings as well as people received absolution from sin from the pope as representative of divinity on earth. Likewise, the monarchs of Christendom were presumed to receive their lands from his hands (as tributary to St. Peter's

chair). Further, the widely scattered mendicant friars made his assumption of world sway almost a reality.

It was impossible that emperor and pope should claim universal control (though theoretically in different realms), without clash, as we have already seen. The climax was reached in the conflict betwen Frederick I, Barbarossa and Pope Hadrian on the question of the control of Italy, never quite conceded to the Emperors. The pope insisted that Frederick should hold the stirrup while he mounted his horse—a small formality, but great in the subjection it implied. The pope died but the fight lived.

Popish power reached its culmination with Innocent III. He introduced Confession, which gave to local priests dangerous power over families into whose privacy it penetrated. The interdict, placing an individual or a whole people under the ban, was the whip through which Innocent forced kings to do his bidding. It was more potent than armies, for the superstitious masses fled with horror from the excommunicated—deemed accursed, and from whose polluted person all religious rites were withheld. Further, the pope's representatives—"papal legates," as they were called—could in his name dictate commands and prohibitions on whole nations in defiance of their kings.

The Popes and the Jews.

The effect of this power on the condition of the Jews was obvious. However friendly a monarch might be towards them, the pope or his bishop could demand a reverse treatment. This actually happened in nearly every European land. We have seen popes absolving debts to Jewish creditors. On what theory was this justified?

Perhaps on the ground that the Jews having rejected Jesus the Savior were arch heretics deserving no rights, tolerated at all only by the benevolent sufferance of the Christian. Jews might have protested against this ecclesiastical logic. The lamb might protest to the hungry lion.

The pope could, like the emperor, be a protector of the Jews, too. Innocent III protected them, not in rights or privileges, but only against mob violence and forced conversion. Beyond that, he was not their ally but their persecutor. His bitter letters to Alfonso of Castile, Pedro of Aragon and the Count of Nevers (France), reveal his fanatic antagonism to "the people of the book."

So it happened that even in Spanish Christian kingdoms, where Jews had been treated with enlightened kindness (See chap. xii), the pope determined to insinuate the canker of antagonism. Soon it began to work. In 1212 a mob attacked the Jews of Toledo. Then they were made to suffer by Ferdinand III of Leon and Castile, the "saint" who burnt heretics with his own hand. Next they were debased through priestly urgency by James I of Aragon.

Finally Innocent III summoned the Fourth Lateran Council, known as "the great council" because of the daring demands of the papacy, and because of its far-reaching consequences. Its decisions brought Christendom more completely under popish dominance than ever before. Strange historic contrast—in the very year 1215, in which England won its Magna Charta of political liberty, was this Council called to issue edicts of spiritual serfdom. So we are almost prepared to learn that this great charter was one of the things that Innocent III condemned.

We are concerned here only with those of its seventy

canons that dealt with the Jews. They were chiefly confirmatory of earlier anti-Jewish restrictions, giving them renewed and more decided reinforcement. They were all framed with the view of keeping the Jew in an inferior station, on the theory that it was outrageous that "these accursed of God" should hold, in any relation of life, a position of superiority over "the true believer." Hence provisions such as the following:

"No prince dare give office to a Jew" (directly aimed against Spain and Provence). "Jews may not employ Christians as servants." "They must pay tithes and taxes to the Church." "They must not appear in the public streets during Easter."

The Badge.

But the climax of cruel discrimination was reached in a new imposition—a distinctive Jewish dress. To Innocent III, then, do we owe the culmination of degradation—the yellow badge. Henceforth for six centuries this mark of infamy singled out the Jew for the mockery, the scorn and occasionally the violence of every passerby. Spanish Jewry for a time put off the evil day, but was eventually forced to succumb.

The persistent contempt of their neighbors that this fostered could not but react unfavorably on Jewish character. It tended to break their spirit, though it did not shake their faith. Surrounded by hostility and insult and later confined to the slums of the towns, they became indifferent to externals in dress, manners and speech, the pernicious effect of which has almost survived to this day.

Even as far as distant Hungary the edict was carried. Here the Jews had settled since the days of the Chazars. Free and esteemed, they became prosperous farmers of salt mines, they were given the right of coinage and many

posts of honor. No longer must this be tolerated. A later pope, Gregory IX, thundered his anti-Jewish edict in 1232. The official insignia of honor was now exchanged for the yellow badge of shame.

Massacre of Albigenses.

The Church was not much kinder to its own children, who dared to defy its decisions. For a new crusade was now preached not against the unbelieving Turk abroad, but against the unbelieving Christian at home. Those liberal Christians of Southern France, the Albigenses, had always been a thorn in the Church's side (p. 141). This heresy should be tolerated no longer. The "mission" to eradicate them was entrusted to the monk Arnold of Citeaux as inspirer, and to Count Simon de Montfort as executor. So the dreadful work, that only the most wilfully blind could call religious, was begun. In 1209 the city of Beziers was burnt to the ground and the inhabitants put to the sword. As it was not always possible to distinguish orthodox from heretic, the heartless Arnold commanded his minions to slay them all, with the words "God will know his own." Some two hundred Jews living in their midst also lost their lives. So, at the same time this quiet and learned Jewish community was dispersed and their books consigned to the flames. Bigotry always fears scholarship.

A persistent warfare against surviving Albigenses was steadily continued, until they were shorn of all power and deprived of all their lands. The dominions of Raymond of Toulouse were given to Simon de Montfort. De Montfort's wife Alice went further yet in her fanatic zeal, arrested the Jews of Toulouse and handed over their children to the Church. De Montfort restored the

adults to liberty, but the children remained in the ecclesiastical clutches.

It was in 1228 that the relentless monks completed their war of extermination against their own coreligionists, the Albigenses. For the possession of a Bible translated into French was sufficient proof of heresy and meant the death of its owner. Thus was a peaceful and cultured group of Christians exterminated from Southern France. With their passing, there disappeared, too, the Provencal community of Jews that gave so much promise of a golden literary era, like unto Spain.

This whole epoch was worthy to be called "A Dark Age," not because men were ignorant, but because independent thought was branded as sin.

The Monkish Orders.

It was during the rule of Innocent III (whom John Draper calls "the great criminal") that the Dominican and Franciscan orders were established. They were instituted to stem the tide of heresy, which almost meant —to check the spread of knowledge.

They were called the mendicant monks, for they forswore wealth and lived by begging alms. Poverty as such was a virtue again, as in the days of the Essenes (*T. Y.*, pp. 82, 197). Dominic, who gave his name to the first Order, was born in 1170, built up a complete organization with friars, nuns and tertiaries. This Dominican order grew rapidly, and its monasteries were established all over Christendom. When Raymond de Penyaforte became Dominican general he made persecution of heretics its chief concern, even bidding its disciples study Hebrew and Arabic the better to convert Jews

and Mohammedans. Under such impetus anti-Jewish laws were now enacted thick and fast.

Francis d'Assisi, founder of the Franciscan Order, who flourished about the year 1200, was one of the noble men of history. He began his great career by distributing all his means to the poor until bereft of every shred of possession. But the Franciscans soon forgot the three principles of chastity, poverty and obedience instituted by their gentle founder.

Barefoot friars of both Orders now spread over Europe, reverenced by the people with superstitious awe, and so exercising over them a perilous influence at times. It was they who did the work of the Church that the dissipated clergy neglected. And it was through them that the claim of the pope to universal dominance attained its zenith. Thus it came about that "all interests were absorbed, all classes governed and all passions colored by religious fervor," writes Lecky. The political became completely subordinate to the theological.

We shall see in later chapters how the influence of the monastic orders was nearly always against the Jews. Through their teaching, as much as any, the people acquired that mythical concept of a Jew as a species of monstrosity, whose blood was tainted. They helped to spread the slander of "Ritual Murder." So in the days when might meant right, the Jews learnt what it cost for a minority to adhere to a religion not accepted by their surroundings.

Notes and References.

Christian Ascetics:

A good picture of the abnormal extremes to which hermits, ascetics and "saints" were carried in their well-intentioned fanaticism, will be found in Lecky's *Intellectual Development of Europe.* Some even regarded

washing as sin and sanctioned dirt and the diseases it bred. He further points out that it led to the abandonment of family ties and extinguished civic virtues.

The Badge:

The usual badge was a yellow, red or white ring on the upper garment. The Jew found without it was fined. The shapes and colors varied in different lands. Usually round, at times it was made in the shape of the Tablets of the Law.

Morals of the Clergy:

Read *The Council of Trent,* by James Anthony Froude, for the complete account of the degeneration of the Catholic clergy. Also *Caesar Borgia,* by Garner, McBride, Nast & Co., N. Y.

Francis d'Assisi:

Leaders of Christian and Anti-Christian Thought, by Ernest Renan. Mathieson & Co., London.

The Ghetto in Church Legislation:

Old European Jewries, chap. iii, by David Philipson. Jewish Publication Society of America.

Theme for Discussion:

Contrast the Jewish Essenes with the Christian monks.

THE SYNAGOGUE AT REGENSBURG.

CHAPTER XVII.

JEWISH LIFE IN GERMAN STATES.

The Church now dominated society, giving character to its popular life and entering so largely into all its concerns as to make the position of the Jew who was not of the Church still more anomalous. We saw (p. 49) that economically he had no place in the feudal system. In language, food and occupation, in belief and outlook so different was his life, that Christian and Jew might have said one to the other: "Our ways are not your ways, nor our thoughts your thoughts."

A Jewish Troubadour.

Yet he did not stand willingly aloof, when religion did not bid withdrawal. For example, we find a Jew among the troubadours. Those poet minne-singers (*minne*—love) would wander with harp and lyre from castle to castle where the baron and his lady, together with their retainers, would listen to their song of chivalry and adventure and throw them money (*largesse*, as it was called), on which they lived. A Jewish poet of this order was Susskind of Trimberg-on-the-Saale, who flourished about the year 1200. A few of his lyrics are preserved, wherein the knight and his lady of the days of romance were among his favorite themes. But his own life revealed the conflict of Israel among the nations that he portrays in the fable of the wolf. Either he can be minne-singer to the Gentile and suppress the Jew, or, he may throw in his lot with his people and then he must

abandon his art. How often has that alternative faced the son of Israel even in brighter days!

The feudal baron occasionally lowered the portcullis of his castle to admit the Jew bringing wares from a distant land. At times he received articles of value in exchange for money, when money was the need—say of the impoverished knight who wished to vary the monotony of an idle career by wandering forth to the wars, and needed suitable equipment. He would expect to redeem the pledge by hiring out his sword to any lord who had a skirmish on hand, for it was the day of mercenaries.

The "Ritual Murder" Slander.

In times of peaceful lull the Jew was let alone, though "severely alone." But he was always at the mercy of the caprice of the multitude. At best he was mistrusted and readily made the object of suspicion. If a dead body was found it was quite usual to charge the murder to the Jews on the grotesque theory that they had used the blood for their Passover ritual. Little did the Christian know that in formulating this monstrous charge against the Jew it was but borrowing from the pagan an earlier charge brought against the Christian; in the latter case it was a follower of the Church who had been charged with using blood for his sacrament service, in the former that he used it in the Passover bread. Both charges were equally fabulous, that against the Jew, based on the biblical precept to place the blood of the lamb upon the door-post; that against the Christian, based on the belief that the wine at the sacrament miraculously became the blood of the Savior. With Christianity's rise to power, the slander against the Church soon disappeared; but against the Jew it grew in virulence; and on this false

SCHAMES ALLEY IN PRAGUE.

charge Jews were slain every century and in every land. Nor is this lie yet dead. In 1247 the Jews appealed to Pope Innocent IV for protection against this calumny. He issued a bull declaring the charge false and unfounded. But it was brought up again every few years —in Mayence in 1283, in Munich in 1285, in Oberwesel and Boppard in 1286. Other instances will be detailed later. The charge always meant plunder and massacre.

Another Synod.

A synod had been convened by R. Gershom in the year 1000; a second, in the year 1146 after the Second Crusade. Now, to strengthen the bonds between Jew and Jew in those perilous days, another synod was summoned at Mayence in the year 1223:

First, it arranged to divide the distribution of the burden of royal taxation in fair proportion. (For when a king decided to extort money from "his Jews," he might favor one Jew by exemption at the expense of others.) This decision and those that follow throw a lurid light on the times:

No bad treatment by Gentiles should justify dishonorable treatment of them.

It severely condemned the counterfeiting of coin.

The "informer"—whose mischievous disclosures often brought so much injury—was to make good any loss incurred by his betrayal (p. 127).

He who sought an office in the synagogue by bringing outside, Gentile, influence to bear, was to be excommunicated. (In Maccabæan days Jason sought the high priesthood through Greek influence (*T. Y.*, p. 33). History was repeating itself.)

The "Empire."

Yet, in the German Empire, "so called," the emperor gave the Jews a quasi protection, as did Conrad III. in the second crusade. But there was none to protect them from the emperor, who was, as it were, the court of last resort. He usually had his hands full to subvert the intrigues of his rival, the Pope. Then, too, his local office as German king conflicted with his international past as Roman emperor. Sometimes the emperor was a Saxon, sometimes a Franconian, then a Bavarian or a Swabian or again an Austrian. For Germany then included pretty well all of Central Europe—a group of States—not a nation.

The conflict between the pope and the emperor grew in bitterness; that between Pope Hadrian and Barbarossa, the most picturesque monarch of the Middle Ages, has already been told. The latter would have liked to have been a Charlemagne, but he spent his best years in fighting for that elusive prize, "Roman kingship," crossing the Alps six times that he might have more profitably devoted to strengthening Germany.

Then, too, the Italian himself protested against this subordinate position and fought against the German kings for independence. That conflict continued for three centuries. The opponents acquired party names from their respective war cries. The Guelphs (Welfe) supported the Pope, the Ghibelines (Waiblingen) rallied round the German emperor. The pope supported the Italian side, not to further Italian independence, but only to curb the emperor's power.

The Emperor's Right in the Jews.

In these struggles the Jew could take no official part, yet he was often made the sufferer. Much depended on

the whim of the emperor. Though Barbarossa was firm in exacting his vested rights in the Jews, yet he was not ill-disposed towards them. What were those vested rights? The German emperors claimed to be the hereditary successors of the ancient Roman emperors. Since a Roman emperor, Vespasian, had conquered the Judæan State, the Jews were regarded as the emperor's servants. This old claim was now revived under the title of "servants of the chamber." It really meant that the revenue derived from the Jews was the emperor's perquisite for his private treasury. Yet, for that matter without any such supposed right, English and French kings sold and leased their Jews as their personal chattels. Under gracious emperors Jews could carry arms and hold lands and slaves. But these were never assured rights, only temporary grants.

An example of capricious treatment of the Jews is well seen in the case of Frederick II (who became emperor in 1212). He was a grandson of Barbarossa, last of the Hohenstaufen line. A cultured man, speaking six languages, and a patron of letters, he was not unnaturally interested in Jewish scholarship. He invited some savants to settle in Italy and befriended them. One of these was Jacob Anatoli, a pupil of Michael Scotus. He translated for the emperor the Arabic of Averroes' Aristotle into Hebrew, whence it was translated into Latin. This task had also been undertaken by Ibn Tibbon.

Yet this same Frederick II shut the Jews up in ghettos, restricted their occupations, heavily taxed them and forced them to wear the badge. He even rebuked Duke Frederick of Austria for issuing the following laws for Jewish protection. The murderer of a Jew should be put to death; the kidnaper of a Jewish child was to be

punished for theft; Jews were to have local jurisdiction and to be protected from extortion. What a pity the Austrian Frederick was not emperor!

Small comfort was it to the Jew, never eager for revenge, to see Frederick II, in spite of his seven crowns, worsted in conflict with the popes and dying under the ban. After all, hard though he was, Frederick II might have been regarded as a protecting providence of Israel compared with their persecutors after his death. For anarchy now followed, and it went hard with them in the Guelf and Ghibeline struggle. War always brings out the savage in man, and the Jew was a convenient outlet for brutal lusts. They were burnt in the Sinzig synagogue by self-styled "Judenbrenner" (burners of Jews). In spite of Duke Frederick's humane provisions, Austria reaffirmed all the anti-Jewish edicts of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.

Meir of Rothenberg.

When, in 1273, Rudolph of Hapsburg was chosen emperor some condition of order and security was restored. Aided financially by the Jews, he gave them some protection and issued a denial of the "blood accusation." Under him flourished Meir of Rothenberg, one of the last of the Tosafists (p. 129). Much as we admire his Talmudic erudition—for, like R. Gershom, he was called "a light"—still more do we esteem his piety. The German Jews, with Meir at their head, had determined to leave this land of persecution and emigrate to the East. But the flight of Meir and his party was discovered and he was arrested. Rudolph did not wish the withdrawal of a people whom he could mulct from time to time. Meir was imprisoned. The Jews offered a large sum for

the release of their revered teacher. But the noble man refused freedom on that condition, fearing that the precedent might suggest to future rapacious kings a new means of squeezing the Jews.

Like Akiba, he answered questions on the Law from his prison; and in the prison he died in 1293. Even his body was held for ransom.

Poets and legalists usually move in different planes. But Meir, the Tosafist, was a poet, too, with the Law naturally as his theme. Here are some verses from a dirge bewailing the burning of the Pentateuch in 1285 in Paris. It is incorporated in Fast of Ab ritual—a *Kinah* or lamentation:

The Burning of the Law.

Ask, is it well, O thou consumed of fire,
With those that mourn for thee,
That yearn to tread thy courts, that sore desire
Thy sanctuary;

That, panting for thy land's sweet dust, are grieved,
And sorrow in their souls,
And by the flames of wasting fire bereaved,
Mourn for thy scrolls;

And thou revealed amid a heavenly fire,
By earthly fire consumed,
Say how the foe unscorched escaped the pyre
Thy flames illumed!

Thou sittest high exalted, lofty foe!
To judge the sons of God;
And with thy judgments stern dost bring them low
Beneath thy rod.

O Sinai! was it then for this God chose
Thy mount of modest height,
Rejecting statelier, while on thee arose
His glorious light?

Moses; and Aaron in the mountain Hor;
I will of them inquire:
Is there another to replace this Law
Devoured of fire?

In sackcloth I will clothe and sable band,
For well-beloved by me
Were they whose lives were many as the sand—
The slain of thee.

I am astonied that the day's fair light
Yet shineth brilliantly
On all things:—it is ever dark as night
To me and thee.

E'en as thy Rock has sore afflicted thee
He will assuage thy woe;
Will turn again the tribes' captivity,
And raise thee low.

My heart shall be uplifted on the day
Thy Rock shall be thy light,
When He shall make thy gloom to pass away,
Thy darkness bright.

Translated by Nina Davis.

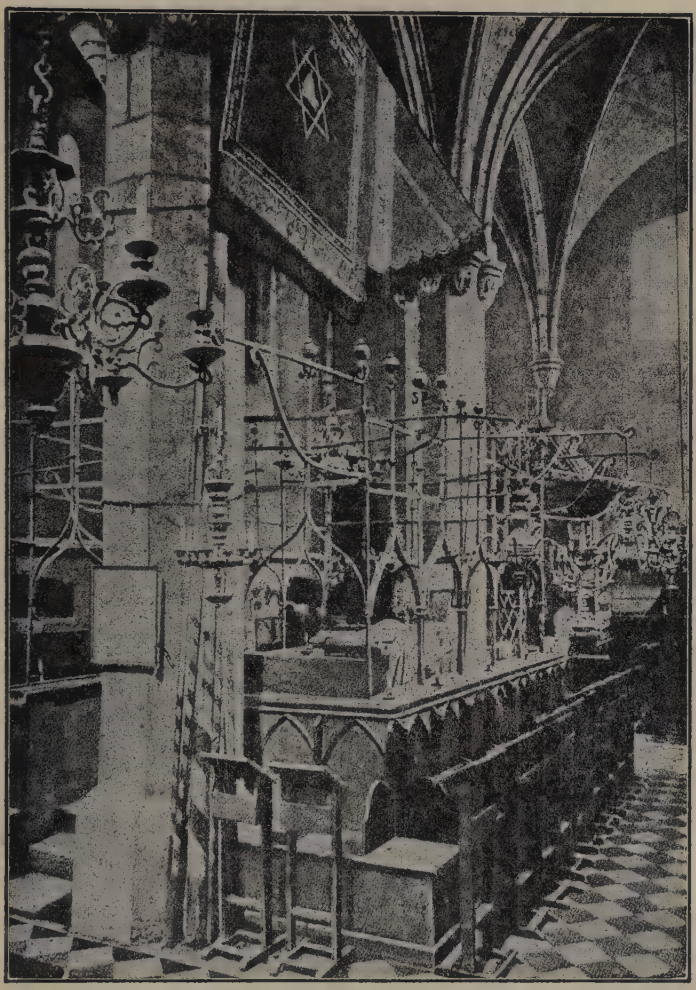
Notes and References.

The Popes and the "Blood Accusation" (Ritual Murder):

Reference has been made to the Bull of Innocent IV, issued in 1247. We give a translation in full:

To the Archbishops and Bishops of Germany.

We have received a pitiable complaint from the Jews of Germany. They say that some nobles, lay and ecclesiastical, and other powerful and notable men within your cities and dioceses, designing to seize and usurp their goods unjustly, devise against them impious counsels and invent diverse pretexts. Without considering that testimonies to the Christian Faith have proceeded from their records and that the sacred scripture among other precepts of the Law says: "Thou shalt not kill," and forbid them at their Passover ceremonies to touch any dead



INTERIOR ALT-NEU SYNAGOGUE AT PRAGUE.

flesh, they falsely accuse the Jews of using in these same ceremonies the body of a murdered child, thinking that the said practice is required by their Law, whereas it is clearly contrary to their Law. And they cast upon the Jews, with malicious intent, any corpse that by chance is discovered at any place. Attacking them with these and other inventions, and without formal accusation, confession or conviction, and in despite of the privileges conceded to the Jews by the clemency of the Holy See, they despoil them of their goods (contrary to the law of God and of justice), and they visit them with hunger, imprisonment and so many calamities and afflictions, punishing them with diverse punishments (even condemning many of them to shameful death) that the Jews, living under the rule of the said princes, notables, and powerful men in worse plight than were their fathers under Pharoah in Egypt, are compelled to leave places where they and their ancestors have dwelt from time immemorial. Hence, in fear of extermination, they have thought it necessary to have recourse to the protection fo the Holy See. Now, therefore, being unwilling that the Jews should be unjustly harassed (for God in his mercy awaits their conversion, seeing that, on the testimony of the Prophet, it is believed that the remnant of them is destined to be saved), we order that you show yourselves favourable and well disposed to them, and whenever you find any violent attempt made against them, with respect to the matters mentioned above, by the prelates, nobles, and powerful men aforesaid, you shall see that the matter is treated according to law, and shall not in future permit the Jews to be improperly molested on these or similar charges by any persons whatsoever. Those who molest them you shall summarily restrain by your ecclesiastical censure.

We append the Bull of Gregory X, issued in 1272:

Since Jews cannot bear testimony against Christians, we decree that the testimony of Christians against Jews shall be of no avail unless there is a Jew bearing testimony among them. For it sometimes happens that Chris-

tians lose their children, and Jews are charged by their enemies with taking them away and killing them and using their hearts and blood for religious purposes; the fathers of the children, or other Christians, in hatred of the Jews, hide the children away so that they may cause trouble to the Jews and gain money from them for relieving them from their trouble, and in order that they may most falsely assert that the Jews have secretly stolen and murdered their children and that they use the blood for religious purposes, whereas their law strictly forbids them to use blood for ceremonial purposes, or to taste it, or to eat the flesh of animals with cloven hoofs, as has been many times demonstrated at our court by Jews converted to the Christian faith. On charges of this kind Jews have often been seized and imprisoned unjustly. We decree that in such cases the testimony of Christians against Jews shall not be admitted; that Jews imprisoned on this empty charge shall be liberated; that they be not imprisoned in future on this empty charge unless (which we cannot believe) they are found in the act.

Similar Bulls, protesting against the calumny were issued by Martin V, 1422; Nicholas V, 1447, and Paul III, 1540.

Jewish Troubadours.

Jewish Life in the Middle Ages, by Israel Abrahams, pp. 361-2, J. P. S. of A.

Only a Word, a story of mediæval life in which the hired mercenary plays so large a part. The author wonderfully reproduces the atmosphere of the Middle Ages. Original German by George Ebers.

Servants of the Chamber:

Latin: Servi camerae; German, Kammerknechtschaft. *Camera* means chamber.

Theme for Discussion:

The troubadour Süskind suggests the question in how far could mediæval Jews enter into the social life of the Gentile.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW FARED THE JEWS OF ENGLAND

Britain, situated at the extreme northwest of Europe, and an island at that, was reached by civilization later than the southern or central portion of the Continent. The Roman, Julius Cæsar, contemporary of Herod and Hillel, found the Britains just before the dawn of the Christian era little better than savages. There is no record of Jewish settlement in its early barbaric history. During the whole formative Saxon period, when the seven petty kingdoms were welded into one and Britain became England, there are only a few references to Jews in the Church chronicles. One of these prohibits Christians from appearing at Jewish feasts. A prohibition always reveals a practice. Until the Norman conquests their presence here was fleeting and their numbers sparse.

Under Norman Kings.

But when William the Conqueror came over from Normandy in 1066 he brought Jews in his train. They had a reputation for wealth and he needed money—'twas the chronic need of kings. So many of the Norman castles seen today scattered through England in more or less state of decay were built with Jewish gold. His successor, Rufus, rather shocked the country by his friendliness toward those whom they called "the enemies of Christ." Henry I, the next monarch, granted them a charter with privilege of free movement through the

country and right to be judged by their peers in courts of law.

To the credit of the Jews, be it said, they immediately marked their presence in England by attention to education. In Oxford, where Alfred the Great had established a university, they built Moses Hall and Jacob Hall for the training of their children, and Lombard Hall in London, the capital. They also had communities in York, Lincoln, Norwich, Cambridge, Canterbury and a few other English towns. (See map, p. 169.)

"Blood Accusation."

The next king, Stephen, reached his throne in 1135 (the year of birth of Maimonides in Spain), after a civil war. The impoverished king soon followed the Continental custom of mulcting the Jews to refill his exchequer, even to the extent of hatching slanderous conspiracies against them as pretexts for despoiling them. The rumor went forth in the year 1144 that Jews had stolen a boy, William of Norwich, to use his blood for the making of Passover cakes (Matzoth). This meant, of course, a raid on Jewish property. This was the first recorded "blood accusation." Later charges in other lands have already been recorded in the preceding chapter.

At Gloucester and Bury St. Edmunds similar charges were brought with the same consequent enrichment of the royal exchequer. A shrewd historian has remarked that no sooner was a king in need of money than it was conveniently discovered that the Jews had committed a crime justifying the payment of damages. The most notorious of these boy murder charges was that of Hugh of Lincoln, in the middle of the thirteenth century. In that case, not content with confiscating their property, twenty Jews were hung and a hundred imprisoned.

In all of these cases the Jews were condemned without trial. The retelling of this story in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" and the erection of a shrine over the boy's tomb in Lincoln Cathedral has helped to perpetuate the slander.

Stephen's successor, Henry II, heavily taxed the Jews, both in his French and English dominions. By the attitude of the Church they were disqualified practically, though not officially, for public office, husbandry and handicrafts. This exclusion limited their means of livelihood to trade and to money-lending on interest, then called usury. This the Church condemned as sin—not realizing the biblical distinction between lending to the poor as an act of charity and lending to the foreigner for commerce as an act of business (see Exod. xxii, 25; Leviticus xxv, 35-38; Deut. xv, 7-11). In any case the Jew's estate was forfeited to the crown at his death. The monarch then here, as in France, used the Jews as a sponge with which to absorb the wealth of the nation (p. 145). The Crown ultimately obtained the money, the Jews in the end only the odium.

Under Plantaganet Kings.

Yet neither these tragedies nor this irksome taxation quite reflect the normal status of English Jews during the Plantaganet era.

Some, banished from Northern France by Philip Augustus in 1180 (p. 144), found a safe asylum in England On the whole, we may say the Jews were kindly treated as long as ecclesiastics did not antagonize the population against them. They earned the reputation of benevolence to their poorer brethren and, at first, many

Distribution of
THE JEWS OF ENGLAND
before the Expulsion
Newcastle on Tyne
Lancaster
YORK
Beverley
Doncaster
Grimsby
Beaumaris
Rhuddland
Conway
Flint
Newborough
Carnarvon
LINCOLN
Nottingham
Bala
Derby
Kingslynn
Criccieth
Harlech
Stamford
NORWICH
Bungay
Bridgnorth
LEICESTER
Coventry
Huntingdon
Thetford
Eye
Warwick
NORTHAMPTON
BURY S EDMUNDS
Worcester
CAMBRIDGE
BEDFORD
Sudbury
Ipswich
HEREFORD
Tewkesbury
Dunstable
Hitchin
Colchester
GLOUCESTER
Berkhamsted
OXFORD
Hertford
Newport
Cricklade
Wycombe
BRISTOL
Reading
LONDON
Guildford
Rochester
Canterbury
Wells
Devizees
Newbury
Windsor
Farnham
Marlborough
Wilton
WINCHESTER
Rye
Romsey
Southampton
Arundel
Winchelsea
Dorchester
Chichester
EXETER
Bosham

proselytes joined the synagogue. Of co , that was not long permitted. In spite of tax extortion their wonderful thrift in an age when industrial occupations were despised by all but the humblest classes and where their outlets of expenditures were few, kept them in affluence. Some even built themselves palaces of stone—but not as much for pride as for protection. For gradually they noticed that their wealth was awakening jealousy and changing cordiality into ill-will. It only then needed religious prejudice fomented by Thomas a Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, for that ill-will to deepen into hatred. So as on the Continent, the Church finally succeeded in changing their status from one of friendliness and equality to that of subserviency and isolation.

This antagonism reached its climax in 1189 at the coronation of Richard I—the very monarch who, coming to the East on the third Crusade, invited Maimonides to be his physician. A body of the most representative Jews of England attended this function with rich presents from their brethren, expressive of their loyalty and in the hope of more assured protection. How terribly far from their expectations was the outcome! The display of wealth stirred the covetous and vindictive passions of the surrounding throngs. The deputation was plundered. The savage in man once roused is not easily quelled. The signal given, the loot of Jewish homes and injury of their persons became general throughout Jewish settlements in England—in Norwich, Edmondsbury, Stamford, Lincoln. But the tragedy reached its climax in York.

Tragedy of York Castle.

Some of the harassed Jews fled to York Castle. On came the mob and surrounded the castle. The clergy

were the most brutal, in urging on the besiegers, shouting "destroy the enemies of Christ." Despair gave courage to the besieged, when the resources of resistance became exhausted. The venerable rabbi in their midst arose and said, "The God of our fathers hath said we must die for our religion; let us then die by our own hands rather than by the hands of these savages." Perhaps he saw a precedent in the self-slaughter of the besieged in the fortress of Masada, in the days when Rome overthrew Judæa (*T. Y.*, p. 170). In awful solemnity the agonized men put their wives and children to death and then slew themselves, having first set fire to the castle. A few survivors came forth and begged for mercy. But the populace rushed in, and, disappointed at the escape of their prey, wreaked their glut for slaughter on these few survivors. No punishment was inflicted on the marauders, though nearly a thousand Jewish souls perished on that awful day. Later the matter was investigated, but indignation was expressed, not at the destruction of the Jews, but only at the destruction of records of outstanding debts to them, which could now not be collected by the Crown. Only the property actually found could go to the royal exchequer.

When King Richard returned from the Crusades, he gave some attention to the Jews, but only in the sense of their being a revenue-producing body. The valuation of their incomes and corresponding assessment became a department of the State. They were "protected," but the price came high.

King John.

John will always be remembered as the monarch whose outrageous behavior roused all the barons of England to unite in compelling him to sign the Magna Charter, in

1215. Thus his very badness indirectly gave to the English people their charter of liberty. Such are life's compensations.

With the Jews this unprincipled man followed a crafty policy. He offered those in his French dominions every inducement to settle in England. Once there, he gave them every opportunity to amass wealth, confirming all old rights for a money consideration. When the time was ripe he dropped the mask and plundered them. The calf had been fattened for slaughter. His cruelty was relentless in forcing his claim. From Abraham of Bristol he ordered that a tooth each day should be drawn until after the loss of seven, the tortured man gave up 10,000 marks. Nor were the barons much kinder; but still in the Magna Charta, drawn up by them, a rough justice was accorded to the Jew.

Henry III.

In the long reign of Henry III their condition grew steadily worse. Their movements were more restricted and they were treated as the king's chattels. The persistent enmity of the Church had now thoroughly impregnated the people. The distinctive badge instituted by Innocent III and the Lateran Council (in the very year of the Magna Charta) was now introduced into England. Proselytism to Judaism was forbidden as a capital offense, while conversion of Jews to Christianity was encouraged by every possible means, a special *domus conversiorum* (house of proselytes), being established for the purpose, where apostates could live at the public charge. Following the unworthy example of previous kings, Henry III exacted one-third of the Jewish possessions—this was followed by later exactions. Aaron of York was mulcted at 30,000 marks.

Next the king "leased" the Jews to his brother Richard to be squeezed again. In 1240 he called a Jewish "Parliament," but only as a device to exact 20,000 marks more. Though almost forced to the obnoxious trade of money-lending, they did not find it an exclusive monopoly; they encountered rivals in the Caorsini of Italy. Drained in this way, the Jews of England begged permission to leave the kingdom. This was refused, so completely now were their persons, property and movements at the mercy of the king.

As the powerful barons had made use of the Jews to acquire the lands of the small barons, they were now denied all rights of landed property.

Jews Banished from England.

This sad state of things brings us to the next reign—that of Edward I, who closed an epoch in English Jewry. For it was the beginning of the end. A religious man, according to his lights, he bluntly forbade the practice of usury but granted the Jews permission to engage in handicrafts and agriculture. But it was an empty privilege. Long estranged from the soil they could not in a moment assume the role of farmers—though rental of farms for ten years was allowed. Farming involves long and sure tenure. As to the manual arts, the guilds of the Middle Ages (corresponding somewhat to the trade unions of today, but into which Jews were not then admitted) controlled the handicrafts.

So this situation, depriving them of livelihood, made their status impossible. Some became outlaws, some apostates and some stooped to a crime, in vogue at the time, of clipping the coin. It was, as it were, a retaliation in small—for the crimes committed against Jews in large.

Thus bad treatment demoralizes. For this crime Jews were hanged—non-Jewish offenders being let off on a lighter penalty.

The king and the Church now began shutting up all synagogues. The toils were closing around Anglo-Israel. The Church next forbade social and industrial relations between Jew and Christian. There was only one thing

HOUSE OF AARON OF LINCOLN

left for the king to do—*to expel them.* This he did. In 1290 the dread edict went forth. All debts to Jews were cancelled. None dared linger under penalty of death, however precarious their condition or their circumstances. As in Egypt of old, they were driven forth, some of the 16,511 perishing by the way. The mob followed them with cries of triumph. One ship captain, paid to convey a number to the Continent, and having all their goods on board, sailed away leaving them stranded on the shore

amidst the jeers of the bystanders. No mercy to the outcast *deicides,* "slayers of God," as they were called. So Israel had to take up the wanderer's staff again to try and find an oasis in this hostile world desert—a pillow where he might lay his weary head.

Notes and References.

Pre-expulsion Relics:

The entire relics of the Jews of England up to the expulsion in 1290 are few—some stone houses, a bronze ewer and some documents in which they are characteristically styled "sons of the Devil." There are still preserved some 200 *Shtaaroth* (contracts) in Hebrew. This Chaldaic word *staar* was introduced into the Latin as *staarum;* it is said that the "Star Chamber" of England was so called, because it was the depository of these documents.

Ibn Ezra wrote his Hebrew grammar during his English stay.

Aaron of Lincoln.

Joseph Jacobs is the best authority on the pre-expulsion period of Anglo-Jewish history. His article "Aaron of Lincoln" (*Jewish Quarterly Review,* vol. x) throws much light on the peculiar financial relations between the Crown and the Jews. This greatest financier died in 1186, when all his immense wealth went to the king as that of all "usurers," so called. Perhaps it was he who "organized the English Jewry into one great banking association." Since all loan of money for profit was condemned by the Church, the development of English industry would have been sadly impeded were it not for the Jews. In this way the building of sixteen or more abbeys and monasteries was due to Aaron of Lincoln; he also enabled the abbeys to acquire lands and to buy hay. Earls, abbots, priors, bishops, sheriffs, archdeacons, municipalities and towns borrowed from him. The king used the money he took from the Jews to get the barons into his power. Since he was satisfied to

receive only part of debts outstanding to a Jew at his death, this often encouraged needy and unscrupulous debtors to slay the Jewish creditor. Mr. Jacobs deplores that "the intolerance of the Church prevented Aaron of Lincoln (and others) from devoting his talents of organization to any purpose but the sordid one of money seeking."

Ritual and History:

From the old Jewish Prayer Book valuable bits of history may be gathered, for very often an elegy or dirge written on the occasion of a persecution would be incorporated into the Liturgy. For example, a Lamentation was written on the English massacres at London and at York in 1190, when the sad news was brought to the Continent by eye witnesses. From it we learn that English Jews were known for their piety as well as their wealth.

Expulsion from England:

The expulsion was very thorough. No conforming Jew was seen in England from 1290 to 1657, the year of their re-settlement.

The Jews of Angevin, England, Joseph Jacobs, Putnam, 1893.

"By associating a Christian oath with entry into every reputable calling, State combined with Church to prevent the Jew from association with his neighbor in most natural and usual way."

Catalogue "Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition," Frank Haes, London, 1888.

Jews of York, Isaac Disraeli, in *Curiosities of Literature.*

"Expulsion of the Jews from England," B. L. Abrahams, *Jewish Quarterly Review,* vol. vii.

Theme for Discussion:

What defense can be offered for Edward's expulsion of the Jews?

BOOK IV.

RATIONALISM AND MYSTICISM.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

France.

Jews burnt in Blois on ritual murder charge 1171

Extinction of Albigenses 1229
Yechiel of Paris, in Disputation 1240
Burning of Talmud, Paris 1242
Council of Beziers 1246
Louis IX (The Pious) banishes the Jews from his dominions 1254

Kolonymos b. Kalonymos 1287
Gersonides, b.....1288
Moses Narboni 1300
First expulsion of Jews by Philip IV (le bel).....1306
Return 1315
Gesereth Ha-roem 1320
Gesereth Metzaraem 1321
Second expulsion by Charles IV...1322
Battle of Poictiers.1356
Return of Jews....1359
Third and last expulsion by Charles VI.....1394

Spain.

Almohedes' persecution 1146
Nachmanides, b....1194
Isaac Blind, founder of Kabala, Azrael's Bahir, about 1200
Alcharisi, poet, fl..1200
Maimonides, d.....1204

Solomon, b., Adret (Rashba) b.....1245
Moses de Leon, b..1250
Asher ben Jechiel.1250
Don Zag, astronomer, about 1250

Barcelona disputation 1263

Jacob b., Asher compiles "Tur," (code of laws)....1340

Miscellaneous.

David Alroy, pseudo - Messiah in East 1164

Frederick II, Emperor 1212

Rudolph of Hapsburg, Emperor...1247
Innocent IV, issues bull against Blood Accusation.1247

Blood Accusation begins in Germany 1287
Saad Addaula, Finance Minister in Persia 1291
Rindfleisch riots...1298

MOSES MAIMONIDES.

BOOK IV. RATIONALISM AND MYSTICISM

CHAPTER XIX.

MAIMONIDES.

Our story now takes us back once more to Spain.

Judaism reaches one of its great climaxes in Moses ben Maimon, "From Moses to Moses there arose none like Moses." Greater creative spirits had arisen in Israel since the Lawgiver stood on Pisgah, but none so able to grasp the spirit of Judaism in its entirety, its law and its philosophy, and to give it its comparative place in the spiritual development of man.

Twenty-five years after the birth of Ibn Daud, thirty years after the death of Rashi, and but five years after the death of Jehuda Halevi, Maimonides was born in Cordova, the Athens of Jewish and Moslem Spain. He had the advantage of a scholarly father, an adept in astronomy, mathematics and in the Talmud. Thus he was early imbued with a love of religion and with an appreciation of general culture. But the son's sphere of study took a wider range than that of his father, embracing also logic, philosophy and medicine. His was one of those master minds that assimilate all knowledge of the age. He was gifted with penetration for unlocking the obscure, with genius for classification and with indefatigable industry.

Moslem Unitarians.

The skies were not as bright in Maimonides' boyhood as in the golden days of Abder Rahman III. The usually

liberal Moor was exhibiting a spell of intolerance. It will be recalled that after the one Caliphate of Cordova had broken up into many, the *Almoravid* became the ruling royal house (p. 73). But now another Moorish tribe, the *Almohades,* descended upon Spain from Africa and held sway for the half century contemporaneous with the bulk of Maimonides' life.

Almohades mean Unitarians, believers in one God, and Ibn Timart was the founder of this new sect. But were not all Mohammedans such, with the watchword "Allah alone is God," differing in this respect from the trinitarian Christians? Yes and no. The idea of Allah (God) had become material and gross in the minds of the masses (p. 37). Ibn Timart then appeared upon the scene as a sort of reforming prophet and tried to give to his people a purer idea of divinity.

If that only had characterized his movement, all had been well. But his enthusiasm reached the anti-climax of fanaticism. With more than Puritan zeal he denounced not only luxury but even protested against the fine and liberal arts. Further, he relentlessly persecuted both Jews and Christians, who did not accept his creed. It was "the Koran or the sword" again. To think that the Jew, the pioneer Unitarian, mankind's apostle of monotheism (see note), should be persecuted by a sect that placed on its banner Judaism's cardinal dogma so strictly expressed in its second commandment! Logically Ibn Timart should have hailed instead of rejecting the Jew. But such are the ironies of history.

Forced Converts.

Cordova was taken in 1148 by the new Moslem invader, and with it the beautiful synagogues of Seville and Lucena. The Jews had to choose between apostacy and

exile. Glad are we to record that the majority chose exile. So, about the time when Maimonides was Bar Mitzvah, his family left their native land. After years of wandering they reached Fez in Morocco, though the Almohades held sway there, too. Some Jews compromised. Outwardly these accepted "the turban," i. e., the supremacy of the prophetship of Mahomet, and attended the mosque, while secretly they lived according to Jewish law. How often was Israel forced to take that dubious stand. We shall meet it again.

A Jew of the Maghreb (Morocco) wrote to a distant rabbi asking the status of those who, to save their lives and those of their families, voiced the formula "Allah is God and Mahomet is his prophet." The reply was brutally severe—"they have no status in Judaism and their prayers would be unacceptable to God."

Maimonides' father had earlier displayed a kindlier attitude in his famous "letter of consolation." Here, while in no sense condoning the Moslem disguise he had yet said: "He who clings to the Law with but his finger tips has more hope than he who lets it go altogether."

But now Maimonides himself on behalf of the wavering Jews of Morocco answered the rabbi who preached martyrdom—at a safe distance. His letter breathed charity to his sore tried brethren. That was well. But he went further, and distinguished between heathen and Moslem coercion. The former had demanded transgression of Judaism in deed, the latter only in word.

While recognizing the tremendous difference between idolatry and Islam, we must say that this particular distinction is not well taken. For religion deals essentially with the inner life. It demands sincerity first and last. Only "he who speaketh the truth in his heart can

enter God's tabernacle." (This point is discussed on page 69).

Maimonides, however, was right in stating in a case of this kind that martyrdom is meritorious, not mandatory. It is heroic to die for one's religion; but not all are heroes. The spirit of his letter in refusing to abandon those who had strayed, while urging them to seek homes where they could frankly live the Jewish life, was wise and helpful.

This famous "Letter on Apostacy" (*Iggereth Hashemod*), written when he was but twenty-five, was not the first product of his pen. He had already given forth an astronomical treatise on the Jewish calendar, a book on logic, a natural history and some *Responsa* (note p. 129).

Physician in Egypt.

In the meantime home and fortunes had changed. He had left the intolerant atmosphere of Fez; later we find him in Palestine, and eventually he settled in Fostat, the port of Cairo, Egypt. In 1166 his elder brother was drowned and his wealth with him. Maimonides now became the sole support of the family. How did he gather the means—as a teacher of the Law? No! he lived up to that fine rabbinical maxim, "The Law must not be used as a crown or a spade," and he vented his contempt on all who did. Although it was his life work it was a labor of love. He and his brother had been diamond merchants. Now he devoted himself to the more congenial calling of physician. In medicine alone he had written many works on hæmorrhoids, poisons, antidotes and asthma—largely summaries of the great masters from Galen down.

Indeed it was to his ability as a doctor that he won

eminence in the non-Jewish world. Even King Richard of England wanted him as his physician. For the third Crusade had brought the "lion-hearted" king to the East (p. 127). His Saracen (Eastern Mohammedan) opponent was Saladin, whom fate and ability had raised to the Egyptian throne and made vizier of the Caliph. His star still in the ascendant, his supremacy steadily spread through Asia until we find him Caliph of Bagdad. In all lands where he held sway, Jews found a safe asylum. He is one of the world's great men. Both Sunnites and Shiites (orthodox and reform Moslem) forgot their differences and came under his banner. This was a strange contrast to the dissensions in the Christian camp in this Crusade. No wonder the armies of the Cross were so hopelessly defeated.

Egypt was a great Jewish centre at this time. Its communities under a *nagid* (prince) were allowed to live their own life undisturbed. When Maimonides settled there, natural fitness placed him at the head of Egyptian Jewry—a post he accepted without compensation. He brought a truer knowledge of Judaism among them and breathed new life into the community. He reconciled Rabbanites with Karaites, throwing in his influence with the former. For the Karaite movement had not fulfilled the promise of its early days of becoming the banner bearer of learning, light and rational interpretation of Jewish Law.

So Maimonides made Cairo a great centre for Judaism and Saladin made it a centre for Mohammedanism.

Writings of Maimonides.

We must now consider the three great works of Maimonides, to which he owes his immortality and which gave a new impetus to Jewish theological thought.

First, his commentary on the Mishna called "Light" (Hebrew, *Maor*). It was written in Arabic which, as already pointed out, was the native tongue of Eastern Jews. Now the Gemara itself is a commentary on the Mishna, forming together with it—the Talmud (*T. Y., p.* 251). But the Gemara is so much more than a commentary that a concise, clarifying exposition was yet an unfulfilled need. Maimonides' clear insight made him the ideal commentator. He showed at once reverence yet independence and the critic's all-important quality—discrimination.

But the *Maor* is not only a commentary on the text, but also a general survey of each theme as a whole. (See chapter on "Rashi" on this point, pp. 134 and 137.) Here and there he furnishes scientific data and ethical instruction in which he brought to bear all his varied knowledge. Then, too, he commented on the Law in the light of later Jewish practice.

A Jewish Creed.

This broad and exhaustive treatment led him to formulate a complete Jewish creed.

This was strangely new. Judaism had never been expressed in a system of beliefs before. Deed had always been its center of gravity. Its tendency was to grant liberty of belief, but to demand conformity of action. Of course, certain fundamentals were implied. Prime importance of belief in God was involved in the rabbinic dictum, "Die rather than proclaim belief in a false divinity." The second commandment shows that idolatry, not atheism, was the fear then. People worshiped many, rather than none. Belief in "the world to come" was implied in the teaching, "Who denies future life will be denied future life." But a complete summary of be-

lief, "such and such is Judaism" was an innovation. Perhaps the suggestion of formulating it came unconsciously from the Church, whose Councils from time to time formulated specific articles of creed, and drew hard lines between orthodoxy and heresy.

So Maimonides may have felt it necessary to define Judaism in order to distinguish it from Christianity on the one hand, and Islam on the other, and to answer the missionaries of both. In reading Maimonides' "Thirteen Articles," we can see that they were so worded as to bring out the distinction between Judaism and the two great religions which had been derived from it.

We here give them in brief with some of Maimonides' comments:

First:—*The Existence of God,* on whose being all other beings depend.

Second:—*The Unity of God,* whose oneness is allness; if one God suffices, a second is superfluous. If one God is not sufficient, He cannot be perfect, and therefore cannot be divine. (This is really an argument against the Trinity.)

Third:—*God's Spirituality*—not subject to motion, rest, time or space.

Fourth:—*God's Eternity.* God is the First Cause, the ever-active Intellect. (Here we see the influence of Aristotle's philosophy.)

Fifth:—*Prayer to God only* (as against prayer to saints or departed souls).

Sixth:—*The Truth of the Prophets.* (See next chapter on his definition of prophecy.)

Seventh:—*The Supremacy of the Prophet Moses for All Time.* (This is a distinct challenge to Mahomet's claim, *The* Prophet, superseding all others.)

Eighth:—*The Whole of Our Law was given to Moses.* (Possibly a defense of the traditional oral rabbinic law and a reply to the Karaites.

Ninth:—The *Permanence of the Law.* (This is an answer to the Christian claim that the coming of Jesus abrogated the Mosaic Law. *T. Y.*, pp. 133, 199.)

Tenth:—*God's Omniscience.*

Eleventh:—*God Rewards the Obedient and Punishes the Transgressor.* What is the highest reward—life hereafter; what is the gravest punishment—annihilation (mark, not hell).

Twelfth:—*The Coming of the Messiah.* We are looking forward to an age rather than to a man (note, p. 260).

Thirteenth:—*The Resurrection.* (Opinions differ as to whether Maimonides implied here only immortality of the soul or also revival of the body. It was the discussion of this question that first led him to draw up a Jewish creed.)

Although no synod endorsed the validity of these "Thirteen Articles of Creed," they have been accepted as the official expression of the Jewish belief, and as such are incorporated in the ritual in prose and in verse (the hymn *Yigdol*). Not that they passed entirely unquestioned; later theologians reduced the number of Judaism's essentials.

Summary of Jewish Law.

The second great work of Maimonides was of similar character to the first, "Light," but of vaster scope. It was a summary of all Talmudic law and was called *"Yod Hachazaka"* (see note). His work on the Mishna

was a commentary; his work on the entire Talmud was a codification. For not only, as has been already pointed out, does the Talmud contain law (*Halacha*), but in addition thereto much miscellaneous material summarized under the general title, *Agada* (narrative). But, furthermore, even the *Halacha* is not systematized, but arranged when it is arranged at all, on a somewhat arbitrary plan. So it is really hard to find a particular law in its intricate mazes of discussion.

Maimonides therefore conceived the gigantic task of collecting all the laws contained in the Bible, Talmud and the later Geonim and classifying them in a Code. This great work, consisting of a thousand chapters, and which absorbed so many of his best years, was preceded by an introductory summary of the affirmative and negative precepts.

Maimonides begins his book of law with God, the source of law; this he expands into a philosophy of religion. This divinity behind the precept is never lost, and it exalts the most trivial injunction into an act of divine service. Not that he presented all law on one level. He distinguished between the literal and the figurative and between the biblical law and the rabbinic deduction. At times he ventures to drop the superstitious customs that often grow around laws like barnacles on a ship, and also to omit precepts that had become obsolete.

Yet this great work had the fault of its virtues. In leaving out all the Talmudic argument that led up to a law he certainly simplified it for the layman, but thereby presented it as a dogmatic decision rather than a logical deduction. Dogmatism was distinctively repugnant to the Jewish sense. As far as possible he would know why he is asked to obey this law or that. As long as the *Halacha* was connected with its chain of discussion, it

was pliable and even open to modification by later rabbis. But set down apart, it becomes crystalized and unchangeable. Its life depends on fluidity, the opportunity for new interpretation.

Maimonides wanted to save the Law from endless commentary, yet his *"Yod"* gave rise to commentaries of its own. Compare this experience with that of the Karaites, compelled to draw up new rites and rules, the very thing they had organized to avoid (p. 32).

So not all Israel accepted Maimonides' deductions unquestioned, as a final court of appeal. Still it was very popular and spread throughout the whole Jewish world, though the printing press was not yet at hand to manifold copies. Poets sang its praises and even Christian and Moslem scholars gave it appreciative study.

It is remarkable that both in formulating a creed and in summarizing the Law, this most progressive of men endeavored to give to both Jewish belief and practice a finality that would have prevented their growth and advance.

We will now consider in a separate chapter the greatest product of his great mind. It is rather recommended to advanced pupils.

Notes and References.

Saladin:

Lessing wrote Nathan der Weise to challenge Christianity's claim to the monopoly of religious truth and worth. He therefore skilfully chose this epoch of the Third Crusade, when the Moorish East was most civilized and Christian Europe most barbaric.

Walter Scott, in his *Talisman,* also contrasts Saladin favorably with Richard Cœur de Lion.

The Great Hand:

Maimonides' *Mishna Torah, i. e.,* "Second Law," is also

called *Yod Hachazaka* ("The Great Hand") for the following reason: יד *Yod* numbers "Fourteen." The work contained fourteen books; the phrase, "great hand," is applied by Moses to the power of God, who did much for Israel through "the hand of Moses"; this work was written by a Moses (Maimon). Hence the work consists of "fourteen" books of "Moses" Maimonides, and deals with the Law and Power ("hand") of God. This is a good example both of the customary use of a Bible phrase for the title of a book and of the fantastic explanation.

Unity of God:

Greek, Mono-theism; Latin, Unitarianism. See *Studies in Judaism,* ch. vi; "The Dogmas of Judaism," S. Schechter. J. P. S. of A.

"Judaism and Unitarianism," M. H. Harris, in *Sermons of American Rabbis.*

See *Jewish Quarterly Review,* vol. ii, article on Maimuni's father's "Letter on Apostacy."

Theme for Discussion:

The difference between Judaism and Christian Unitarianism.

MOSES HALL, BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

CHAPTER XX.

"THE GUIDE TO THE PERPLEXED."

Religion and Philosophy.

Now for a brief survey of Maimonides' greatest work, "Guide to the Perplexed." It was addressed directly to his pupil, Joseph Aknin, and was intended only for the thinking few, perplexed by some apparent contradictions between the Bible and the current philosophy. To quote one of its introductory sentences:—"My theory aims at pointing out a straight way. Ye who have gone astray in the field of the Holy Law, come hither and follow the path which I have prepared." Its purpose was to make clear the essential harmony between the concepts of God and the soul as taught by Revelation and the conclusions about the universe taught by metaphysics. It is, then, a reconciliation between religion and philosophy between faith and reason.

So universal problems are here fully discussed—God's omniscience and man's free-will; the existence of evil and the inherent goodness of the world and many other apparent contradictions of life.

Just as Philo endeavored to reconcile Judaism with Neo-Platonism, the prevailing philosophy of his day, so now Maimonides, a scholar with a profounder grasp of Judaism, endeavored to harmonize it with the teaching of Aristotle, the dominant system of thought in *his* time.

He first treats both Judaism and philosophy as emanations of the divine spirit. Revelation to him includes both. The rabbis had said that the Oral Law (as con-

tained in the Mishna) had been revealed on Mount Sinai as well as the Written Law (Pentateuch)—why not also philosophy? He further said the human mind at its highest can think out for itself what was revealed at Sinai, and can reach the stage of prophecy without supernatural aid. (Jehuda Halevi took the opposite position —Revelation and Prophecy to him were superior because supernatural, while philosophy because dependent on human Reason, was fallible p. 99).

God.

So far the introduction. He begins the work proper by laying emphasis on God as pure spirit. Therefore, all biblical anthropomorphisms, i. e., all instances where Scripture speaks of God in a human way are explained by him as symbolic expressions of philosophic ideas. He defines God as the Principle of all Essences, the First Cause, the Ever-active Intellect.

Next as to God's nature. The Bible ascribes attributes to Him. These are not really divine qualities, but only our human attempt to explain the quality of His actions. For God cannot have qualities; they belong only to finite beings and imply limitations. They only express comparative degrees between beings of similar character. A man is good or wise compared with another not as intelligent or as worthy. But God is unlimited, alone, supreme, incomparable. We can speak of His existence —no more.

So far the declaration of God's being; next to prove it(as far as it can be proved). Behind the existing moving universe there must be a permanent Being, setting all in motion without being part of that motion. In this First Being power and action are simultaneous without an intervening step. In God alone they are one.

Spirit and Matter.

The bridging of the gulf from infinite to finite, from spirit to matter, from God to the world, had always been a baffling problem. Even Maimonides, rationalist though he is, drops into mysticism here. He imagines nine heavenly spheres, each with a directing soul, an intellect. The highest sphere is the first Intelligence—direct emanation from the First Cause, God. These emanations pass down through groups of spheres until the lowest sphere is reached. Here we come to the active intellect—the world of man. Thus the gradual descent from spirit to matter is attained. From pure spirit comes intellect; from coarse matter, sin. The angels of the Bible are the intelligences of philosophy; thus he sought to harmonize Scripture with the philosophy of Aristotle.

We may be surprised that so sober and rational a mind as Maimonides should imagine the heavenly spheres as endowed with souls! But the era of science had not yet dawned. What knew the world of his day of natural law, of spectrum analysis? Had it not yet to wait four hundred years before Galileo would demonstrate that the earth moves, and he was imprisoned even for making the assertion!

Prophecy.

Next, Maimonides' theory of man. He is both matter and spirit in varying degrees. His soul steadily expands as he uses his knowledge to conquer his frailties. For the soul is, as it were, a spiritual stage which we gradually attain in our growth upward. By freedom of will divinely granted to all we can rise intellectually and morally to the degree of the angels. This highest attainable stage is *prophecy*—communion with God. In its most exalted degree it was attained only by Moses.

Every human being may become a prophet by earnest energy of mind and heart. To attain prophecy is to win immortality. Therefore, the punishment of those who make no effort to expand the mind and who yield without a struggle to the lust of the senses, is oblivion, the loss of future life.

Evil, then, he teaches, is not a positive entity; it is simply the failure of man to reach the perfect standard of right. This disposes at once of a Devil, a positive spirit of evil.

Scripture.

He accepted the authenticity and authority of the Scripture, but claimed the right of his own interpretation. He discerned an outer meaning for the multitude, an inner meaning for the penetrating few. That has always been a popular notion.

Perhaps at times he went a little far in expounding Bible teachings on philosophic lines. For example, some of its early stories he treats as abstract ideas in the form of incidents. Adam's three sons are the three divisions of man—vegetable, animal, intellectual. Jacob's wrestling and Balaam's speaking ass are explained away as visions. Adam's sin marks the relations between sensation and moral faculty. (This may recall the explanation of Scripture allegorically by the Alexandrian school in Philo's day.)

He was no blind follower of Aristotle—certainly not when it was a question between Scripture and the Greek master. So he rejected the philosophic theory of "the eternity of matter," for the teaching of Genesis that God created it. Here he followed Ibn Daud (p. 111). In fact, he parts company with philosophy and stands wholly on religious ground in declaring that everything exists by God's will.

He reveals at once his faith and optimism in teaching that every precept in the Torah was intended to further the physical and spiritual welfare of man. Man is the object of creation and his happiness the ultimate aim of divine law. God imposes nothing arbitrary. Some Mosaic laws that do not reflect the highest phase of civilization are improved modifications of institutions so universally prevalent in the age of Moses that the time for abolition was not yet ripe. He regards, for example, animal sacrifice as such a concession to prevailing practice. We might add to this group slavery and polygamy.

Thus, throughout, Judaism's dogmas are presented as harmonizing with the ripest thought of the twelfth century and Judaism's law as rational, logical, benevolent and uplifting.

Influence of "The Guide."

The "Guide to the Perplexed" gave a new impetus to Jewish thought and a decided status to Jewish theology; Judaism was henceforth regarded as a philosophy as well as a law.

It was a guide to the perplexities of his day; and, though scientific investigation has changed our theory of the universe, it remains in many respects a guide to the perplexities of ours. The salutary influence of the work and the man was felt throughout the whole Jewish world. Nay, further—like Gabirol's "Source of Life" (note, p. 83)—it did missionary work among the Gentiles. Once more "from Zion went forth the Law." Translated from Arabic to Hebrew (*Moreh Nebuchim*), it was re-translated from Hebrew to Latin; studied by the greatest of the scholastic philosophers of the Middle Ages, Albertus

Magnus, Duns Scotus, and chiefly by Thomas Aquinas, it largely influenced Christian thought.

Some General Teachings of Maimonides.

So far a general outline of these three great works, but some quotations from them and from his miscellaneous writings may give us a better insight into his great mind and ethical outlook:

"The *dietary laws,*" he declared, "are only sanitary laws." (We would not say "only" to-day. They had a sanctifying purpose, too). And he here uses his medical knowledge to offer valuable suggestions about physical exercise. He said simple laws of health should be a part of every one's education. He strongly condemned *asceticism.* Here he dealt a blow at the fasting hermits so numerous in his time.

Again he tells us: "We should dress up to our means, but eat below our means." His word on all things is essentially rational; he is that or nothing. "Prayers should be simple and brief." When his enemies said, "the essence of faith is blind obedience," he replied: "Yes, the faith of a fool." "Judaism's verification depends not on miracles." Again: " We hear too much of unions in Israel, let us hear more of *union.*" When asked why he always looked toward the future he replied: "Because my eyes are in front."

But he had to answer sceptics as well as believers. We might almost think that he had to confront the doctrine of evolution when he said: "We do not remove the wonders of creation by pushing it back to the creation of an atom." He, too, realized the danger of *indifference,* for he preferred a sin done in innocent sincerity to a divine command fulfilled carelessly. He fought hard

against formalism and superstition. As to the *Hereafter*, he ridicules the sensual heaven of the Moslem and the cruel hell of the Christian. "The future life for the good is not a garden of Eden of worldly pleasure enjoyed in idleness, with diamonds, couches and wines, nor for the bad is it a consuming fire." "He who asks what shall be my reward if I obey is still like the child who studies for a cake."

His Estimate of Christianity.

Of *Christianity* he said: "It has done more to spread abroad the Bible than Judaism itself; wherever it carried trade it carried the Bible, doing Jewish work with non-Jewish hands." How liberal and how true! This remark the Gentile censors struck out of his work. Why? *They did not want it to be known how broad and tolerant Jewish teachers were.* For the same reason, they struck out the famous line in the Talmud: "The righteous of all creeds shall inherit future life." The persecution of the Jews has taken many subtle forms.

His keen mind discerned the distinction between custom and law; and he drew a sharp line between the true science of astronomy and the false science of astrology.

His Ethical Will.

Here are some extracts from his last will to his son: A will that bequeaths valuable counsel is called an ethical will—a kind of will that is never disputed in the law courts:

"Serve God with love: fear only preventeth sin, but love stimulateth to do good."

"Accustom yourself to good morals, for the nature of man dependeth upon habit, and habit taketh root in nature."

"Conduct yourself with care and with honor."

"When you ask a question or reply to one, be not rash; speak in choice language, in a pure tongue, in a moderate voice and strictly to the subject, as one who seeketh to learn and who searcheth for truth and not as one who quarreleth and is eager for victory."

"Let truth, by which you may apparently lose, be more acceptable unto you than falsehood and injustice by which you may apparently profit."

"I have found no remedy for the faltering of the heart like the pursuit of truth and justice."

"Keep firm to your word; let not document, witness or actual possession be stronger in your sight than a verbal promise."

"Keep far from subterfuges, pretexts, sharp practice, flaws and evasions; woe to him who buildeth his house upon them."

"Discern the value of forbearance and you will be holy in the eyes of your enemies."

"There is no nobility like morality and no inheritance like faithfulness."

Notes and References.

A delightful book on *Maimonides,* by Abrahams and Yellin, has been issued by the Jewish Publication Society of America.

Translations of "Guide to the Perplexed":

Into Hebrew, by Samuel Tibbon—the *Moreh Nebuchim.* Two into Latin—one by Buxtorf. Into English, by Dr. M. Friedlander, Bloch Publishing Co.

Philosophic Problems:

An intermediary link between the perfect God and the finite world was posited by Philo in the Logos; it was expressed again by Gabirol, and we shall meet it further expanded in the Kabala.

Nearly all writings on Jewish philosophy since our author's day centre around the "Moreh."

Our author is referred to sometimes as Maimuni,

sometimes as Maimon-ides (son of M.) and also, after his initials, as RaMBaM.

Many of Rambam's letters, unearthed from the *geniza* at Cairo are now extant.

For friendly relations between Jews and Christians, read *Jewish Life in Middle Ages,* I. Abrahams, pp. 413-414.

Theme for Discussion:

Why did Maimonides write his Summary of Jewish Law in Hebrew and his Philosophy in Arabic?

JEWS SWORN IN COURT.

CHAPTER XXI.

MAIMUNISTS AND ANTI-MAIMUNISTS.

Maimuni and the Jews of Arabia.

Distant communities would send to the learned doctor, "the Light of the East," for counsel in difficulties. Such a case arose in Yemen, Arabia. The condition of the Jews there had greatly deteriorated since pre-Mohammedan days (*T. Y.*, ch. xl.) Their religious knowledge was very vague and they knew Scripture only in Agada tales. In the latter part of Maimuni's life the Mohammedans there were somewhat intolerant and at this critical moment an Israelite arose claiming to be the Messiah. It will be noticed that Messiahs always appeared in times of trouble all through Jewish history, since the days of the exile. They often added to the misfortune they expected to remedy—for such movements would usually be treated by the authorities as treasonable. In this perplexity, the thoughtful few appealed to Maimonides.

His reply, "Letter to the South" (Yemen), is famous. First he appealed to their faith; trials are tests of Providence; and he demonstrated Judaism's supreme worth to those "halting between opinions." This brave letter that dared to criticize Islam and the Church was read by the whole Yemen community, and created a religious revival there; while his influence with the Court of Saladin improved their political standing. No wonder the Jews of Yemen included his name in the Kaddish prayer.

A Strenuous Life.

An idea of his "strenuous life" cannot be better presented than in an abstract from a letter to a friend:

"My duties to the Sultan (the Vizier Alfadhel) are very heavy. I am obliged to visit him every day, early in the morning; and when he or any of his children, or any of the inmates of his harem, are indisposed I dare not quit Cairo [a mile and a half from his home at Fostat], and must stay during the greater part of the day in the palace. It also frequently happens that one or two of the royal officers fall sick, and I must attend to their healing. Hence, as a rule, I repair to Cairo very early in the day, and even if nothing unusual happens I do not return to Fostat until the afternoon. Then I am almost dying with hunger. I find the ante-chamber filled with people, both Jews and Gentiles, nobles and common people, judges and bailiffs, friends and foes—a mixed multitude, who await the time of my return.

I dismount from my animal, wash my hands, go forth to my patients, and entreat them to bear with me while I partake of some slight refreshment, the only meal I take in the twenty-four hours. Then I attend to my patients, write prescriptions and directions for their various ailments. Patients go in and out until nightfall, and sometimes even, I solemnly assure you, until two hours and more in the night. I converse with and prescribe for them while lying down from sheer fatigue, and when night falls am so exhausted that I can scarcely speak."

Maimuni's Critics.

But greatness often brings enmity. It has already

been stated that the office of Exilarch (Resh Gelutha) at Babylonia and that of Gaon of the Academy had passed away (p. 43). But they were revived again in Bagdad. In Maimuni's day one Samuel ben Ali held the double post. He was a man of the Korah type (Numbers xvi), caring more for the dazzle of office than for its obligations. He chafed at seeing all this allegiance paid to Maimonides and endeavored to divert it to himself by discrediting the "Jewish Aristotle," as some admirers styled the author of "The Guide." First he pointed out mistakes in the Mishna commentary and then accused Maimuni of heresy because of his views on the resurrection of the body. Ben Ali was endorsed by many sincere Jews who honestly believed these advanced views menaced Judasim.

Maimuni answered his critics in a magnanimous spirit, but his response did not convince them all. It was not the age when men sought rational explanation for religious duties. He who, like Maimonides, dared to bring all questions to the bar of reason, walked a thorny path. So we find that even Moslems feared the "Guide," too, just because it was so rational. Such was the time when people trusted the mysterious rather than the plain. It was in enlightened Spain and the French Provence where Maimonides found his chief allies and sympathetic interpreters. It was there where his "Guide to the Perplexed" was translated into Hebrew and given circulation.

The last drops in life's cup were bitter. Overworked, censured and sick, he experienced the supreme woe—loss of children; only one survived him. He saw, too, in his last years, Egypt disturbed by political faction and ravaged by pestilence and famine.

So, when in 1204 the end came in his 70th year, he may have hailed the merciful release.

The carping voice of criticism was hushed indeed when the calamity came. There was mourning and fasting throughout all the Jewish settlements of the world. Verily, "a prince and a great man had fallen that day in Israel." Verily, "the ark of God was taken."

Opponents of Rationalism.

The opposition awakened by the *Moreh Nebuchim* continued after the author's death and divided Israel into two classes—Maimunists and Anti-Maimunists. But we cannot hold him responsible for the division. We have seen that two parties, a progressive and a conservative, nearly always existed in Judaism. The "Guide" only presented a new point of departure.

There was always a class that interpreted religion narrowly, who looked upon secular learning with suspicion. They regarded philosophy as the door leading to unbelief. Sometimes it does, but for a Bachya or an Ibn Daud it leads to deeper belief (pp. 84, 111). Blind faith has its pitfalls, too. Some of the opponents of the Moreh harbored some superstitions, and held rather gross concepts of God and the future. Here we face one of the dilemmas of life.

Yet we can well see that Maimonides' philosophy of Judaism would not satify all religious needs, apart from the question of culture or liberality. His reconciliation of religion and philosophy was not quite convincing. Immortality was too shadowy to be satisfying; prophecy was exalted, but its presentation was not warm enough to make human appeal. Nor were all content to interpret

the ceremonial law as the temporary expression of eternal principles.

The anti-Maimon forces, *Obscurantists,* i. e., those who portrayed beliefs in mystical terms, were led by Solomon of Montpelier, of Northern France; the Rationalists by the aged David Kimchi of Southern France (p. 142). The conflict began with excommunications on both sides, and it soon spread through all the Jewish centres of Europe. Letters were exchanged, meetings were called. Nachmanides, of whom we shall hear later, tried to effect a compromise, but failed.

Bigotry's Dangerous Consequences.

If the conflict had been confined within the ranks of Israel, the charges and countercharges, and even the recriminations might have been stimulating. But when men are roused on questions of belief they become very intense and at times very bitter. So when Solomon of Montpelier went to the Dominican monks (who were beginning the practice of burning heretics) in order to enlist their bigotry on his side against his own brethren, he crossed the line of conscientious opposition and became an unintentional traitor. But this very act brought the conflict to a climax and once more united all Israel for the common cause and against Solomon's dangerous ally. The betrayers were repudiated and punished. So, while Israel continued to be divided into Maimunists and Anti-Maimunists and while occasionally feeling ran high, henceforth all differences were kept within the confines of Jewry.

When, in 1242, an attack was made on the Talmud by monkish opponents, the chief offender of the Anti-Maimunist party, Jonah Gerundi, seeing the mischief pro-

duced by this appeal to the Benedictines, made a pilgrimage of penance and a public repentance in the synagogue. This did more than anything else to reconcile the opposing parties.

As the years passed by opposition to Maimonides gradually died away. In a much later day the "Moreh" was accepted by the Conservative, and Maimonides' "Thirteen Articles" came to be regarded as the official creed of orthodox Judaism.

Notes and References.

Jews and Medicine:

Jews maintained pre-eminence in medicine throughout the Middle Ages. Their physicians were at the same time surgeons. The fact that Shechita (Jewish method of slaughtering animals for food) involved some knowledge of anatomy and of diseases of the blood may in part explain why many renowned rabbis were also renowned doctors. A Jewish school of medicine existed at Lunel which flooded Southern France with its physicians. Some taught in Montpelier by consent of the faculty. That Christians were often forbidden, under threat of excommunication, to consult Jewish practitioners or even to use their medicines, tells us indirectly how widely they must have been sought. Such prohibitory laws, indeed, were more honored in the breach than in the observance. Many a pope publicly discountenanced the use of Jewish doctors and privately engaged them for his own ailments.

Finally, in 1341, a Church Synod at Avignon had to remove the ban against Jewish doctors out of regard for the public health. Even convents were now placed under the care of Jewish physicians.

Among the monarchs who engaged Jewish doctors in the Middle Ages we may mention Hugh Capet of France; Charles, the Bald, Henry III and IV, Alphonso XI of Castile; Christian IV, of Denmark; Emperor Frederick III, and Queen Maria de Medici, of France.

Maimonides as Physician:

Dr. John Young, of Glasgow, in an article on "Jewish Mediciners," has this to say of the medical writings of Maimonides. "They are most interesting for their discusson of tubercle and lung affections. His popular treatise on poisons is full of practical instruction, rich in remedies—his abridgements of Galen and his extracts from Hypocrates (classic masters of medicine) show wide reading. His treatise on the preservation of health combined physical and moral precepts."

Dr. Young also writes appreciatively of Isaac, the Jew, who in the 10th century wrote a guide to physicians which will bear perusal now. Here are some extracts from it: "Think well of simple remedies." "Most patients recover by the aid of nature without the physician's aid." "If you have a choice between the nutritive means and drugs, use the former."

Theme for Discussion:

In judging others beware of calling rationalists right and mystics wrong, or vice versa. Both may be right from different points of view. It is not a matter of truth, but of temperament.

CHAPTER XXII.

TOLERATION DECLINES IN THE PENINSULA.

Portugal.

We have spoken of the Spanish Peninsula in general, but not of Portugal in particular. Like Castile and Aragon, it was first Moslem; and the Jews settled in it about the same time as they settled in the neighboring Peninsular countries. We hear little of the Jews of Portugal till it was conquered by Alfonso Henriques, a Castilian, in 1139—four years after Maimonides was born. As in the Spanish Christian Kingdoms, the early kings followed the enlightened Moorish precedent in their treatment of the Jews. Here, too, they were appointed to posts of honor, such as *Almoxarifes,* receivers of customs, and farmers of taxes, for which some Jews seemed peculiarly fitted.

Somewhat later fanatic devotees of the Church began to dictate a policy of repression; still toleration lingered here longer than in Spain. Its kings creditably resisted the harsh edicts of Innocent III, Gregory IX and their bigoted followers against the building of synagogues and the appointing of Jews as tax-farmers. They also continued to excuse them from wearing the obnoxious badge, on the payment of tithes.

Alfonso III, who came to the throne in 1246, was a particularly doughty champion of Israel. He regulated their affairs and continued to grant them a more decided autonomy than was conceded by any other European land. Right up to the end of the fourteenth century their affairs were left entirely in their own hands. The

head of the community was styled "rabbi mor." His post by royal appointment was civil as well as religious. Within this small realm he had as much power as a Babylonian Resh Gelutha; he administered justice, issued decrees and made an annual circuit to investigate all the communities, accompanied by a large staff of officials and attendants. The rabbi of each of the seven provinces into which Portugal was divided was subject to him. These rabbis, whose appointment was confirmed by the king, were not only religious authorities but were also local Jewish governors, with power to judge and impose punishment in criminal cases. From this it will be understood that the Jews lived in separate quarters, called "Juderias." But this was true of Spain also.

Castile.

To return to Spain. The story of the Christian half of Spain, so far told, was carried down to the dawn of the thirteenth century; we saw it for a while even more tolerant than Moslem Spain. For it received refugees from the persecution of the Almohades, which drove the family of Maimonides to Africa.

Castile became the largest and most powerful Spanish State after Ferdinand III had united it with Leon and conquered Cordova and Seville, about 1220. But, although the Jews had fought patriotically for this, their country, the clergy were beginning to fan the bigotry of the populace against them. Ferdinand, who would like to have converted them, was yet just and kind. He confirmed all their rights, and they mourned his death in Hebrew elegy.

While Alfonso X was the Infante (heir to the throne), Jews had fought under his banner. As king he was styled "The Wise." He discriminated in favor of the

Jews against the Moslems—giving them their mosques for synagogues. The age was hardly broad enough for the Jews to decline them. But, then, both mosques and synagogues were all to become churches in the end. As throughout the Peninsula, Jews were appointed as State secretaries and treasurers, though not without popish rebuke. Such appointments implied probity of character as well as ability in finance.

This learned king desired to foster for his country a literature and to promote natural science. He, therefore, turned to the scholars of his realm—the Jews and their Arab followers.

The Jews' knowledge of Arabic singled them out as Dragomen (interpreters) and as translators. Treatises on the Quadrant, on quicksilver, books on the properties of metals and precious stones were turned into the vernacular; also at Alphonso's request, portions of the Talmud and Kabala. They compiled, too, for him a history of the world. So the development of this Spanish Castilian literature is largely due to the Jews.

But their most notable translations were of works on astronomy. Don Zag, a synagogue reader, who was a famous astronomer, was engaged to draw up astronomical tables. We shall hear of these "Tables of Alfonso" in connection with the discovery of America. Samuel Halevi invented a water-clock for this king. In his reign the Jews of Toledo built the largest and most beautiful synagogue in Spain.

New Laws and New Taxes.

But what is more capricious than the favor of princes? Because Don Zag surrendered the public monies to the Infante Don Sancho, he was executed and the Jewish

community fined 12,000 gold marevedis. Next, the persistent nagging of the Church, like continuous dropping of water on a stone, had its ultimate effect in creating discrimination against the Jews. So, in his code of laws, Alfonso, wise though he was, was cajoled into adopting against them laws that carried protection in one clause and menace in another. Here are some provisions:

> Jews may keep their present synagogues, but may build no new ones.
>
> Christianity was not to be forced upon them; but acceptance of Judaism by a Christian was to be punished by death.
>
> They were not to be summoned to a court on Jewish festivals; but they must not appear abroad on Christian festivals.

These laws did not go into effect till a later day; but their *formulation* facilitated their eventual enforcement.

In 1281, three years before his father's death, Sancho IV assumed the throne. By acquiring Andalusia for Castile, the flower of the Jewish community was brought under its sway and was made to feel the burden of heavy taxation.

In the Christian part of the Peninsula, a custom prevailed that found no counterpart in the Moslem half. It was the imposition—in addition to regular taxes—of a special annual payment, by each Jew, of thirty dineros (a local coin) in remembrance of the thirty pieces of silver paid to Judas Iscariot for the betrayal of Jesus. No custom could better have been instituted to keep alive prejudice and fan fanaticism.

Otherwise all seemed well. The clergy was sullen but restrained. The Dominicans bided their time. In the security of the hour, Israel continued to take heart

in furthering literary and religious culture. They were thoroughly Spanish in language and custom. They held important posts. They were rich in money and land; nor did they hide their wealth. But they did not see the cloud, "no bigger than a man's hand," forming on the horizon of Castile.

Aragon.

Aragon took a step nearer to the less tolerant standards of the rest of Christendom. Its monarchs, following the German precedent, came to regard the Jews as theirs, with right to mulct at pleasure, though it was rarely indulged. In some towns they were confined to the leper quarter. Yet, here as in Castile, they thoroughly identified themselves with the country, spoke its language and followed its customs. Their occupations were varied. For while a few distinguished themselves in finance, the bulk were engaged in agriculture, viticulture and general handicrafts.

While Ferdinand III was reigning in Castile, James I was reigning in Aragon. Both were contemporaries of Pope Innocent III, but it was only James who yielded to his demand to impose the badge, ordered by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. The Jews protested, but in vain. No doubt this was due to Raymond de Penyaforte, general of the Dominican order, and the king's confessor, who induced his royal master to do penance for his sins by the humiliation of the official enemies of the Church. Yet the Jews could not have regarded James I as an unkind king, for they mourned his death, which occurred in 1276. His successor, Pedro III, exempted some Jews from wearing the badge and also confirmed the rights the Jews still retained.

Solomon ben Adret.

The Spanish outlook then was not as bright in external relations. How fared their internal relations among themselves? They were changing, too.

It was in Barcelona that Rabbi Solomon ben Adret, known by his initials Rashba, was born, in the year 1235. He was not the type of Spanish scholar we have so far been accustomed to meet. He was not a philosopher, scientist or poet, but a Talmudist. Yet a man of broader culture than the average German rabbinic scholar. Still Germany would have been his more congenial atmosphere.

He came to be regarded as the official head in Jewry and a leading authority on Jewish law. Questions came to him from the length and breadth of the Jewish world—from Italy, Africa and from distant Asia Minor. His replies to these, i. e., his *Responsa,* numbering some three thousand, show breadth of view, wide reading and deep thought, as well as Talmudic erudition. They became important additions to the steadily growing code of Jewish law and practise. All communities gladly accepted his suggestions, and throngs of disciples from distant lands came to sit at his feet. That Spain should become the centre of *rabbinic* learning shows the gradual modification in their literary and theological interests.

This "rabbi of Spain," as he was called, was a man of irreproachable integrity and strong personality. His popularity was also due to his being such a staunch champion of Israel maligned. For example, some Dominican monks studied Hebrew only that they might better attack Judaism—so painstaking is antagonism sometimes. One of these, Raymond Martin, wrote two books to prove Christianity from Jewish Scripture and

Talmud. Rashba was ready with dignified and temperate replies. None the less later enemies of Israel made eager use of Martin's arguments and ignored Rashba.

He also defended Judaism against a Mohammedan criticism.

Maimonides had now been dead half a century, but the conflict still raged around his philosophy of Judaism. It was now no longer a conflict against the "Guide to the Perplexed" in particular, but against all secular study in general and especially philosophy. Rashba entered the struggle and sought peace through compromise, but his sympathies were not with the rationalists. So in 1305, a century after Maimonides' death, Rashba issued a ban against all (except medical students) who studied science and philosophy before their thirtieth year.

Verily, rationalism within as well as toleration without were steadily receding tides in Spain.

Notes and References.

Tax-farming:

It was an ancient custom and one still prevalent in the East, where taxes are hard and, at times, impossible to collect, to single out a man able and reliable to undertake the task, giving him military aid and full power. He guarantees a sum to the king, who troubles himself about the matter no further, and then proceeds to collect the taxes as best he can. If successful the profits are large. Jews were often engaged for the purpose, but the wealth acquired was occasionally a menace rather than an advantage.

Navarre:

Navarre, classed as a Spanish province, really belonged to France, and was permeated by the French spirit of persecution; a Jewish massacre occurred in 1328. When

it became a separate kingdom, the Jewish status was somewhat improved.

Rationalists and Obscurantists:

Solomon Petit of Accho, who led the anti-Maimunist party of Germany and France, put the *Moreh* under the ban, and persuaded the Rabbi of Accho to burn it as a heretical work. Nor was he moved from his position by the Jews of the East, who endorsed Maimonides, and who had re-established the office of *Resh Gelutha* for a while. With the further opposition of Italy under the leadership of Hillel of Verona, Petit's project was defeated. But the cause was again taken up by one Abba Mari of Montpelier, the home of the less liberal, and the opponents of rationalism gained the day.

Theme for Discussion:

Was the diversion of Spanish interest from poetry and philosophy to theology and law progressive or retrogressive?

CHAPTER XXIII.

NACHMANIDES AND "THE DISPUTATION."

We have now to tell of another scholar of the Spanish school—Nachmanides. It was he who took the leading part in the famous Disputation under King James I of Aragon. Moses ben Nachman Gerundi, known also by his initials Ra M Ba N, was born in the year 1194 in Gerona, some sixty miles from Barcelona, the home of Rashba, whose pupil he may have been. In studying the latter we noticed that his life-work was not characteristic of the Spanish school, noted for the versatility of its literary interests and the breadth of its views. The distinction is almost as marked in Nachmanides; though living in Spain, he really belonged to the school of Northern France and Germany.

The Mystic versus The Logician.

Born a decade before Maimonides' death, the two men stand at opposite poles. Rambam was a rationalist, Ramban a mystic. The former was reached through his reason, the latter through his emotions. Maimonides sought to prove Judaism, Nachmanides accepted it unquestionably. Even the teachings of the Talmud and the Geonim he, like Rashi, received in the same trustful spirit. Here was a man of faith, reverently bowing to the authority of the past. "Be ours the duty," he might have said, "but to sit at the feet of the scholars of old, not to criticise their teachings, but only to expound them."

So his theory of the universe was in strong contrast

with that of Maimuni. The world for him is not governed by law, but by separate acts of divine will. He not only believed in miracles, but they were vital to his conception of Providence. He believed in evil spirits, in the transmigration of the soul and that all knowledge was hidden in the Torah.

His Human Side.

Yet withal, he was a man of broad erudition who took a profound view of life and felt its grandeur. He was a physician as well as an expounder of the Talmud and deserved the posts of rabbi and chief rabbi to which he was respectively called.

He is nearer to us than Maimonides because he is more sweetly human. While the former advocated an exalted philosophic calm to meet the adversities of life, Nachmanides bids us give natural outlet to joy and sorrow without stoic reserve. He further taught that we should gratify, though temperately, our human capacity for joy, not as a concession to lower nature, but as fulfillment of the divine benevolent purpose in the creation of such capacity. This was of the very spirit of Judaism which discouraged asceticism and only tolerated the Nazarite.

We may infer, then, that such a man who, though he shunned Aristotle as he would shun evil, would, on the other hand, be hardly likely to agree with the *obscurantists* (p. 203). After all, he was too much of a Spaniard to sanction ignorance or endorse blind belief. If he bowed to the *Halacha,* he accepted the Agada *as* Agada—i. e., for what it was, metaphor, homily, picture.

What part, then, did he take in the Maimunist-anti-Maimunistic struggle? He sided with the latter, it is true. He disapproved of the "Guide to the Perplexed," but not

of Maimonides. He suggested, therefore, as a compromise, that only this work be put under the ban (on the "Index Expurgatorium," as the Church hath it), but that no bar be placed against the study of Maimonides' "Yod" (summary of Jewish Law), even though it contained some philosophic teachings. But the compromise failed to satisfy either party. It involved, in fact, a difference fundamental in human nature. If men would only realize that God has not constructed our minds to think alike on all things, and therefore that we should respect each other's differences, we then might realize, too, that truth can be viewed from varied points of view.

The "Disputation."

But however divided Israel may have been within its owns ranks on divergent questions of Jewish belief, as against the Creed of the Church, it presented a united front. So Nachmani deserved and won the approval of all parties for the dignified defense of Judaism in the Barcelona disputation in 1263, now to be considered.

These public theological arguments convinced none, added nothing to the cause of truth, and injured instead of furthering the spirit of religion. For our beliefs are not the results of philosophic deduction and cold analysis. We reach faith through the heart rather than through the mind, and religion finally finds expression in terms of life. In fact, these particular disputations arranged by the Church, and in which Jews were forced to take part, were really a species of Jewish persecution in disguise; for, being a helpless minority, it was more perilous for them to win than to lose. The discussion usually centered around the question as to whether Christian doctrine was contained in Jewish Scripture.

This particular disputation was put on foot by Pablo

Christiani, an apostate from Judaism, one of a class that almost did as much harm to Israel as Christian fanatics. He induced Raymond de Penyaforte, head of the Dominican Order, to arrange this public discussion between himself and Nachmanides, hoping to discomfort his former

A "DISPUTATION"

co-religionists by his intimate knowledge of their literature and their current views.

Nachmani had no choice but to respond to the summons to appear before King James in the palace where the discussion was to take place. He but asked perfect freedom of speech, which the well-disposed monarch readily granted. On the whole, the controversy was conducted in a scholarly spirit and lasted four days. In the course

of the discussion Nachmani brought out the following points:

1st. The coming of the Messiah around which the discussion waged has not the doctrinal importance for the Jew that it has for the Christian. (To the latter he is a Saviour and Divinity, to the former a human king.)

2nd. The Talmudic Agada, on which the apostate expected to score most of his points, were only homilies, moral lessons, parables, ideas of God's dealing told in simple metaphors, and therefore they carried no authority of doctrine or of law.

3rd. As the merit of religious fidelity is proportioned to the sacrifice entailed, therefore it was more meritorious, just because it was harder for the Jews to live loyally to their faith under a Christian ruler than under their own Messiah in their own land.

It ended as all such contests must—without result. Nachmani had the better of the argument and was complimented and even rewarded by the fair-minded king for the intellectual skill and self-restraint he had displayed. But the persistent Dominicans obtained the royal permission to send Pablo as a missionary to all the Jewish communities in Christian Spain, where they were to be forced to listen to arguments against Judaism and to pay his expenses to boot. The apostate preacher attacked the Talmud and so exaggerated its less tolerant passages as to induce the Pope to issue a "bull" (edict) against it. All passages considered undesirable by the Church were now erased. This was the beginning of *censorship*—another form of persecution; censoring the Talmud was occasionally more mischievous than burning it.

Nachmanides Banished.

To offset the virulent preaching of Pablo, Nachmani

circulated a complete account of the Disputation among his brethren. The Dominicans had his pamphlet burnt; and, not succeeding in having the author burnt, too, induced the reluctant king to exile the aged scholar. So ultimately the argument, as in all those disputations, went in favor of those in power.

Weighted with his seventy years, Nachmani had to tear himself from his family, leave his native land and become a wanderer. With something of Jehuda Halevi's love for Zion, he turned his steps to the Holy Land. Alas! he found Jerusalem in ruins, for a war was raging against the Eastern Caliphate. But to his coreligionists there his presence brought new life. He established an academy for Jewish study and students crowded about him. He brought to the East something of the spirit of Spanish culture and wrote a commentary on the Bible to acquaint his disciples with western modes of biblical exposition. Not that his treatment was strictly western, either—i. e., if western meant rationalistic. He believed that the Pentateuch contained all wisdom; certainly his commentary on it contained the best of his. It contained his philosophic conclusions as well as his mystic fancies. But it was the latter that most appealed to his Oriental pupils. He was fond of the allegorical interpretation of Scripture, especially on such themes that invited it, as Creation, the Tree of Life; these gave free play to the imagination and encouraged a relaxation of the discipline of logical thought. Like many another commentator, he was inclined to read later history into the Scripture. He also wrote extensively on the Talmud.

But his influence on his surroundings was good and wholesome, due as much to his winning personality as to his learning. So, solaced by the companionship of loyal friends, he passed away in the year 1270. He had

awakened in the hearts of many of his western brethren a new desire to visit the land of Israel.

We append here one of Nachmani's liturgical poems, a hymn for the New Year:

My King.

Ere time began, ere age to age had thrilled,
I waited in His storehouse, as He willed;
He gave me being, but, my eyes fulfilled,
I shall be summoned back before the King.

He called the hidden to the light of day,
To right and left, each side the fountain lay,
From out the stream and down the steps, the way
That led me to the garden of the King.

Thou gavest me a light my path to guide,
To prove my heart's recesses still untried;
And as I went, Thy voice in warning cried.
"Child, fear thou Him who is thy God and King!"

True weight and measure learned my heart from Thee:
If blessings follow, then what joy for me!
If naught but sin, all mine the shame must be,
For that was not determined by the King.

If hasten, trembling, to confess the whole
Of my transgressions, ere I reach the goal
Where mine own words must witness 'gainst my soul,
And who dares doubt the writing of the King?

Erring, I wandered in the wilderness,
In passion's grave nigh sinking powerless:
Now deeply I repent, in sore distress,
That I kept not the statutes of the King!

With worldly longings was my bosom fraught,
Earth's idle toys and follies all I sought:
Ah, when He judges joys so dearly bought,
How greatly shall I fear my Lord and King!

Now conscious-stricken, humbled to the dust,
Doubting himself, in Thee alone his trust,
He shrinks in terror back, for God is just—
How can a sinner hope to reach the King?

Oh, be Thy mercy in the balance laid,
To hold Thy servant's sins more lightly weighed,
When, his confession penitently made,
He answers for his guilt before the King.

Thine is the love, O God, and Thine the grace,
That folds the sinner in its mild embrace:
Thine the forgiveness bridging o'er the space
'Twixt man's works and the task set by the King.

Unheeding all my sins, I cling to Thee;
I know that mercy will Thy footstool be:
Before I call, O do Thou answer me,
For nothing dare I claim of Thee, my King!

O, Thou who makest guilt to disappear,
My help, my hope, my rock, I will not fear:
Though Thou the body hold in dungeon drear,
The soul has found the palace of the King.

Translated by ALICE LUCAS.

NOTES AND REFERENCES.

Studies in Judaism, by Dr. S. Schechter, J. P. S. of A. In article on Nachmanides, he writes: "If he was not a profound thinker like Maimonides, he had that which is next best, he felt profoundly." From a letter of Nachmanides there quoted, p. 109, we get an insight into the condition of Jerusalem at this time.

Censorship:

Graetz: *History of the Jews;* translation, vol. iv, pp. 659-660.

Theme for Discussion:

Why was it more dangerous for Jews to win than to lose in disputations with the Church?

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RISE OF MYSTICISM.

We spoke of Nachmanides as a mystic. It is time that we consider this spirit and tendency, for we have now reached a new religious development in Israel, new, at least, in the prominent part it was to play in mediæval Judaism. We have referred more than once to the two divisons, in which, in different epochs, the people were grouped—the rationalist appearing at times as Sadducee, Karaite or Maimunist; the conservative either as Pharisee, Rabbanite, or anti-Maimunist. Now there is a third attitude of religious experience, not as frequently met, but quite as legitimate—the mystic.

Mystics Good and Bad.

Mysticism may be expressed as the idea that through his emotions rather than through his reason man communes with God. This at times may be very exalting. It may indicate an exquisite expression of religion, a vivid consciousness of God, a yearning to come near to Him, coupled with a sense of the divine response to this human aspiration, a divine willingness to be nigh to His creatures. This is Mysticism at its best. On the other hand, it may lower the religious standard. Occasionally we find it drifting to fantastic and heretical extremes, fostering the most crass superstitions; mischievous, dabbling with magic; and, again, though rarely, even confusing moral distinctions. This is Mysticism at its worst.

Mysticism as such had existed in every stage of Judaism. We meet it in the Psalms, where a realization of

God is in itself an exalted bliss. We meet it in the visions of the Apocrypha, in the Midrashim of the Talmud. In no age is it altogether absent, and no philosophy is entirely untinged by it—for we even discern it under the rationalism of Maimonides.

Kabala.

But the particular form of Mysticism that loomed into prominence around the thirteenth century is called Kabala.

The word Kabala means Tradition—a long accepted term in general use to indicate the Oral Law as distinct from the Written Law of Scripture, presumed to have been transmitted to Moses at Mount Sinai and then *handed down* by word of mouth from generation to generation. It was now used in a new sense as a mystical *secret* tradition, also transmitted from the remote past, but supposed to have been revealed only to a chosen few.

Kabala then was presented in the form of a mystic exposition of Scripture, particularly of such portions as more readily lend themselves to allegorical interpretation. Such were, for example, the first chapter of Genesis, the Creation, of a theme leading to all sorts of speculation, the visions of some of the Prophets, notably Ezekiel's Vision of the Chariot, that can mean so many things; the Song of Songs, that may indicate the relation between God and Israel beneath the love story. One peculiarity of Kabalistic exposition was based on the fact that the Hebrew letters are also the Hebrew numerals. Two words or sentences that chanced to be numerically identified were presumed to have subtle relation; i.e., אחד one (unity), 1 (א) 8(ח) 4 (ד) makes thirteen; hence suggesting the age at which a boy should accept the law of the *One* God—Bar Mitzvah. This opened the door

to endless new Scriptural deductions and gave free play to the imagination. A whole philosophy or theosophy (knowledge of God), could be woven from this fanciful explanation of Scripture—all sorts of fantastic beliefs could be read into it—and were.

Reaction Against Philosophy and Legalism.

The movement was launched at a period when it would strike a responsive chord in Israel; or perhaps it appearance was a response to the period's need. The philosophy of Maimonides had created a reaction; yet many who shrank from the cold rationalism of the "Guide" were equally repelled by the dry legalism of the Talmudic schools. Yearning for that element in religion that appeals to the emotions, that stirs and thrills and suggests the imminence of God, they turned to the mysticism of the Kabala as to a refuge. Indeed, we meet two parallel strands, each an escape from these two respective conditions, rationalistic and legalistic—the first and the chief in Spain, where philosophic rationalism had widest sway; the second in Germany, where rabbinic legalism prevailed. Each produced a characteristic Kabala—that of Spain, which will demand our chief consideration, was more abstract and speculative and dealt with the metaphysical side of religion; the other, the German, was more tangible and naive and dealt rather with the ceremonial side of religion, and reveled in the mystic suggestions of numbers and letters. But in later development both merged into one system.

With whom did the movement begin? As a mystic cult among a few, a mere sporadic tradition, cherished by scattered individuals, we cannot say.

But it was in the twelfth century, with the appearance

of a book called *Bahir* (Revelation) that Kabala, from being the private doctrine of a few, became a current cult of many. This book is ascribed to one Isaac the Blind, but it was one of those books that are not products of single individuals, though single individuals may edit them. Rather let us say that this compilation was finally put forth by Azrael, of Spain, about the year 1200, reduced to a philosophic system. From Spain the movement spread, reaching to the Orient, where it found a congenial atmosphere. While it met much opposition, it also met wide endorsement from persons of prominence. Among these was Nachmanides, who fostered the movement less by his actual contribution than by his personal influence.

Influence of Mysticism.

The new cult deeply affected those who accepted it. It encouraged asceticism and worked up some of the followers into a state of ecstacy, like Saul among the prophets. But such are not unusual accompaniments of new religious movements. We noticed this in the rise of Karaism. Some Kabalists were moved to great excesses and indulged in extravagant notions that they were Messiahs sent to deliver Israel. Such enthusiasts appeared from time to time and had large followings, especially among the simple minded.

The fascination of Kabala was leading its followers more and more astray from the sober and natural interpretation of the Jewish Law and the divine will. In the thirteenth century Spain produced two great Kabalists: the first, Todros Abulafia, a man of scholarship and weight, whose influence in sowing seeds of mysticism continued for generations after he had passed away. The second Kabalistic enthusiast was Abraham Abulafia, who

tried even to convert the Pope, and finally declared himself the Messiah. Had not Solomon ben Adret intervened with a warning letter to the deluded communities, his followers might have been carried to great excesses, though Adret himself was not entirely unaffected by the fascination of the Kabala. And there were others. The Spanish town of Avela produced a Kabalist and Messiah. But all these were only its advance preachers.

Moses de Leon.

It did not reach the final stage in its complete development till the appearance of Moses de Leon.

This remarkable man, for we must call him in whatever spirit we accept his writings or doings, was born in Leon in 1250. Less scholarly than the Abulafias and lacking the thorough knowledge of rabbinic law of the Tossafists, he exercised a far greater influence on Israel's future. He was, however, well read in mediæval philosophy, in Jewish writings generally, and was particularly versed in all mystical literature—for here his bent, let us say his genius, lay. He led an easy, care-free life, yet found time to use a most prolific pen. Whatever he wrote was of a mystical character. In this spirit he treated the ritual laws, atonement and the future life. Most of these books have never been printed, though the manuscripts are, for the most part, intact.

The Zohar.

But the work that brought him lasting fame was a Kabalistic commentary on the Pentateuch, called the Zohar, a work similar to Bahir, and, like it, meaning illumination. In fact, it was largely an exposition of the former work. He presented it to the world, not as a work that he had written, but only that he had found. He ascribed it to Simon ben Jochai, one of the Tanaim

(*T. Y.* 186); that is, one of the teachers of the Mishna. This saintly man, who flourished a century after the Temple fell, is said to have performed miracles, and his character is further idealized in this book ascribed to him. To ascribe one's work to another was not an unusual device of olden time and was not deemed necessarily discreditable. The Zohar was here presented as a divine revelation transmitted orally to Adam and through the generations until it reached Simon ben Jochai, who wrote it down. There was therefore claimed for it the recognition and veneration of a Holy Scripture; and a divine revelation it continued to be regarded by thousands of Kabalists in succeeding generations. To many it superseded the Talmud as a religious authority. This work contains the completest statement of Kabala, though not presented in an orderly system as in the Bahir. Nor is the whole work of equal merit. Among many childish notions we get flashes of genius. In it the two Kabalistic strands—Spanish and German—converge.

Methods of Kabalistic Interpretation.

Naturally we expect the reading of mystic meanings into Scripture. Did not even Maimonides yield to this temptation and the Alexandrian allegorists? But at no time perhaps was fantastic inference carried so far or allegoric interpretation expanded into so elaborate a system. It laid down four distinct kinds of Scripture interpretation: *P'shat,* the plain meaning, regarded as superficial; *Ramez,* the meaning conveyed in hints; *D'rash,* the more elaborate exposition; and lastly, *Sod,* the inner or secret that alone contained the essential truth, to which the Scripture chiefly owed its value!

The mind was supposed to enter into these modes of understanding the Bible in gradations of visions rising

from the lowest plane of external knowledge to the higher realm of the inner essence until the most exalted knowledge was revealed through—love! For only to those who loved the Law and whose minds were exalted to a state of ecstasy was its full secret disclosed.

Naturally many of its interpretations are fantastic and unconvincing and some rather mar the simple grandeur of the Bible text in seeking far-fetched deductions. But regarding the work as a religious expression independent of the Scripture, though based upon it, it not undeservedly stirred its readers to religious enthusiasm.

Whatever may have been the doubts of the critical as to its supreme authority, mystics received the work with avidity and unquestionably accepted De Leon's declaration that it had reached his hands after having been secreted for a thousand years. In the year 1305 he died, just when most pressed for evidence of the genuineness of his claims. When his wife and daughter confessed that it was his own original work, its influence wavered for a moment and then continued unabated. There was so much charm in the romantic story of its origin that they refused to hear the more sober truth. How often that happens in life. Its later production is evident in its pages, since it mentions events long after the days of ben Jochai. (See notes.) Nevertheless Kabala had come to stay. We have shown that it supplied a legitimate want in Jewish religious life.

In the best opinion of today, though not the work of Simon ben Jochai, it is also not that of De Leon either. He at most is its editor. It is a compilation of mystic writings covering many generations.

Notes and References.

This and the next chapter are recommended for ad-

vanced pupils, though it is presented as simply as the subject permits.

Read Claude Montefiore's "Mystic Passages in the Psalms," *Jewish Quarterly Review,* vol. i, in which he particularly specifies Psalms xvi, lxiii and lxxiii.

Age of the Zohar:

For detailed criticism of the lateness of the Zohar production, see Neubauer's article, "Bahir and Zohar," *Jewish Quarterly Review,* vol. iv. The chief reasons given for its production after the time assigned (second century) are:

(1) The use of vowel points, which were not introduced until the sixth century.

(2) It tells of the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders (1099).

(3) It refers to a comet that appeared in the year 1264.

(4) It quotes Gabirol's "Royal Crown."

(5) The manuscript could not have been preserved a dozen centuries in the damp Palestinian soil.

Neubauer proves that the Bahir is likewise ascribed to an earlier author, Nechanyah ben Hakanah, than its pages indicate.

Zohar and the "Disputations."

As further proof of the lateness of the Zohar, Professor W. Bacher cites the following quotation of Gentile questions and Jewish replies, no doubt suggested by disputations between Jews and Christians, in a disguised form:

First Question—You say that another sanctuary will again be built for you, but where is there in the Scriptures any mention of a third temple? Is it not expressly said of the second temple: The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former? (Haggai ii, 9.) Second Question—You say, further, that you stand nearer God, the Supreme King, than all other nations, but ought not those who are near the King be nigh in joys and permanently free from grief, fear and oppression? You, on the contrary, live constantly in suffering

and oppression, more than all other men. It is we, rather than you, who stand near the Supreme King, and you who are far from Him; therefore we are free from oppression and suffering, while you are constantly troubled and oppressed. Third—Lastly, you assert that you abstain from forbidden kinds of food in order that you may be healthy and that health may be given to your bodies. But in reality it is we, who eat whatever we please, who are healthy and strong, while you are weak and afflicted with illness and bodily infirmities more than all other nations.

The answers were to the following effect: "As regards the first question, the two sanctuaries, which, according to Exodus xv, 17, were to be built by God himself, are not identical with the two historical temples. Both the temple of Solomon and the temple built after Babylonian exile were human handiwork, and had therefore no stability. The real sanctuaries which were promised to Israel will be God's own creation, and will descend upon the new Jerusalem, the one visible to all, the other above it, but hidden and in divine glory. For this true temple we still are waiting."

To the second question he answered: "Undoubtedly we stand nearer than all other nations to the Supreme King, for God has appointed Israel to be the heart of the world. Israel bears the same relation to the other nations as the heart does to the limbs; it is the heart alone which feels pain, suffering and oppression, while the limbs know nothing of them." [Idea taken from Jehuda Halevi.]

Then as to the third question: "Israelites, unlike the Gentiles, abstain from all unclean food, just as the tender and delicate heart, on which the welfare of all the limbs depends, only absorbs the purest elements of food, leaving all coarser nutriment for the stronger limbs."

Like the Zohar, the Book of the Law (Deutronomy), said to have been found in the reign of Josiah, was probably compiled at that time.

Theme for Discussion:

Can we separate faith and realization of God from mysticism?

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF KABALA.

While much mystic literature preceded the Zohar and certainly a voluminous literature followed it, the Zohar as such came to be known as *the* Kabala, the Bible, as it were, of mysticism. The name Kabala implies, as already indicated, a divinely transmitted revelation (a claim made, by the way, for the sacred books of all religions).

In now presenting an outline of its teaching, its main doctrines will be presented, not as in the Zohar only, but in the Bahir also; likewise in later Kabalistic works—a composite picture of many stages in its development.

God.

(1) God is called the *En Sof* (endless) the Infinite, we might almost say the Indefinite, for no attributes can be described to Him. He transcends even life and thought and in Him there is no distinction between subject and object. The old difficulty encountered by each philosophical school—how to bridge the chasm between perfect abstract divinity and the finite, material world—is answered here somewhat in the Neo-Platonic fashion: God's formal Will (thought) contained in itself the universe. He radiates from His infinite light spiritual forces called *Sephirath* (a word meaning both number and sphere) emanations of His unchangeable self, but through which change can take place. A series of ten Sephirath varyingly reflect the divine light. From the first—which is co-eternal with God, the first effect of His will—there

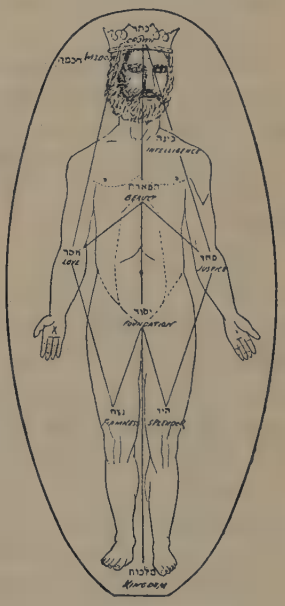
emanate the other nine Sephirath, or, to give them a later name, Intelligences. Each successively flows from the preceding—the third from the second, the fourth from the third, and so throughout.

They are grouped in threes (triads) and are contrasted as positive—male, negative; female, as indicated in the following diagram:

Wisdom	Beauty	Intelligence
Love	Foundation	Justice
Firmness.	Kingdom	Splendor

In their totality they represent the original type of the heavenly man, of whom the earthly man is a faint copy. All things in the lower world have their original type in the higher world. The union of the Sephirath produces the universe and reveals the *En Sof*—the infinite God.

The universe consists of different worlds. The highest world contains angels, realm of light and good; the lower is the real of action and of matter. The lowest is the world of evil spirits, with Samael (Satan) as Prince of Darkness. Each has again its triple group of Sephirath.



THE IDEAL TYPE.

Man.

(2) Man is the highest product of creation, a microcosm—i. e., little world. The members of his body correspond to the visible universe. The body is but the garment of the soul.

The Sephirath idea, the main teaching of Kabala, runs through its entire system. The soul in turn having its ten powers, subdivides into triple groups. There is first the seat of the animal instincts (Hebrew *nefesh*); second, the moral—good and evil (Hebrew, *ruach*); third, the highest—pure intelligence (Hebrew, *neshamah*), direct emanation of divine wisdom.

The soul, so runs the Kabalistic theory, inhabits the realm of the Sephirath prior to its entrance upon earth, where it takes on a bodily form at birth. If it pursues a worthy career, it increases the flow of divine grace through all the intermediary Sephirath, thus furthering the world's salvation. (This was more particularly the function of Israel to whom the Law was revealed and whose fulfilment of its precepts brings blessing.) If the Soul's earthly pilgrimage has been worthy, it returns at the death of the body, enrobed in heavenly vesture, to bask in the joy of the divine presence. But if the earthly career has been sinful and unrepentant, it must enter another body and go a second time, and even a third, through the earthly ordeal. This corresponds to the Hindoo belief in transmigration of the soul. A strong soul may be united with a weaker to support and enrich it. Purified by earthly discipline, it may at last again reach heavenly bliss. Whatever be our modern view of Kabala, here are some very suggestive ideas.

All Souls were created from the beginning. But not all have entered bodily earthly life, and only when they have and all have regained the heavenly Sephirath realm,

will the world's redemption be complete. Thus the pious hasten the good day. There will be no more sin, and life will be an endless Sabbath, and all souls will be united with the highest Soul.

The Messiah.

(3) The soul of the Messiah will enter earthly life last. So in its general plan, Kabala follows the lines of Judaism, ending in the grand Messianic climax. Different Kabalists prefigure the coming of the Messiah in different ways. In the Zohar it will be preceded by gigantic conflict between Cross and Crescent and heralded by supernatural signs. But it was the fondly cherished hope of each Kabalist in turn that the advent of the Messiah was at hand. This explains why so many Kabalists claimed to be Messiahs and also why communities deeply stirred by Kabalistic expectations usually produced Messianic uprisings.

Evil.

(4) Evil in man was the taking of semblance for substance. (Compare this idea of evil with that of Maimonides, p. 193.) It is unreal—the reverse of the divine. But repentance can raise the sinner to the highest. At the time of the Messiah, man's original glory will be restored and Satan will renounce sin.

Prayer.

Perhaps Kabala's most valuable contribution lays in the new importance given to prayer in the Kabala. It is a mystical progress toward God, demanding as prerequisite a state of ecstasy. Such a prayerful condition, which the prophets most completely attained, brings

down divine blessing upon earth. It moves the Sephirath, making them conscious of beneficent influences. Here is the very essence of mysticism. Not unnaturally, Kabala produced the best prayers and changed a mechanical recital of words, to which prayer had largely degenerated, into true divine worship. It exalted and enriched the ritual of the synagogue, though its reflections at times drifted into phantasy.

Providence.

(6) Nor was this Kabala's only merit. Its theory of Providence was more intimate and closer than that of the Maimunistic school. *Every* individual comes under the benign light of divine protection, not only the intellectual (or prophetic) few. Immortality is the reward, not merely of the intellectual genius, but of all men of morality and virtue. Man's love of God, together with his knowledge of the Law, unite heaven and earth. So man's good deeds exercise their far-reaching influence on all the world, even as his sins are equally baneful. This exalted conception of man's place and power must have been very entrancing to Kabalistic disciples and doubtless roused their enthusiasm.

Much space has been given to the theories of Kabala, because it so largely influenced not only the theology, but the whole religious outlook of so many of the Jews of the Middle Ages. It checked cold rationalism at the one extreme and dry formalism at the other.

Defects of Kabala.

Though it deepened a sense of awe, this awe was marred by a superstitious association. The belief that spirits and imps were found in all elements opened the

door to magic. The belief in mystical meanings in every biblical expression based on the numerical value of its words and the theory of a heavenly alphabet of the stars gave further encouragement to the false science of astrology.

Among its abuses, Kabala introduced some heresies: For example, it accepted some of the favorite tenets of the Church—such as the Fall of Man, the existence of evil spirits, and Hell as a place of punishment for sin. All these Judaism, without absolutely abrogating, had cast into the background, until they became dead letters in Jewish doctrine and certainly in the practical consideration of the synagogue. Its group of triple Sephirath came dangerously near playing with the Trinity. No wonder that Kabala had a fascination for many sons of the Church.

Still Kabala was often accepted by conservative Talmudists and was not altogether opposed to the Talmudic spirit.

Owing to the legitimate religious function it really served as already indicated, the movement readily spread from Spain to Italy and thence acquired legitimacy and canonicity for a large portion of the house of Israel. It gave rise to many movements and sects—which will be considered as they occur.

Notes and References.

Kabala:

The philosophy of Kabala was an eclecticism—fragments gathered from many sources. Here are the ecstatic intuitions of Gnosticism, a movement in vogue in the first century A. C. E., (*T. Y.*, p. 199); the dualism of Ormuzd and Ahriman (Zoroastrianism), (*T. Y.*, p. 235); the Neo-Platonic gulf between abstract and concrete, (*T. Y.*, p. 143); with the metempsychosis of Brahminism.

Longfellow's "Sandalphon" came not "from the Talmud of old," but from Kabala.

Tradition:

For a full exposition of what Tradition (Kabala) really is in the legitimate sense, and as accepted by the synagogue in contradistinction to Kabala so-called, the reader is referred to "The History of Jewish Tradition," in Schechter's *Studies in Judaism.* J. P. S. of A.

Dr. Ginzberg has a most informing article on Cabala (a variant spelling) in volume iii of the *Jewish Encyclopedia,* giving a complete survey of the history and philosophy of mysticism. Funk and Wagnalls, N. Y.

Themes for Discussion:

The distinction between Tradition in the orthodox acceptation and in the Kabalistic.

CHAPTER XXVI.

EXPULSIONS FROM FRANCE.

Union of Separate Baronies.

Prior to the reign of Philip Augustus (p. 143) we saw that France was made up of small provinces ruled by barons, of whom the king was but one with just a little more power. The English monarch also held vast French dominions. But Augustus, this strong though cruel king, gradually formed a standing army, crippled the power of the barons and won much territory from the English king. By aiding the pope in heartlessly massacreing the Albigenses, he not only removed the heretics from the nation, but acquired sway over Southern France, too. So it ceased to stand in liberal contrast with the North, as described in chapter xv. By the time his grandson,

(Saint) Louis IX, came to the throne, in 1226, France for the Jew was almost one intolerant whole.

Attacks on The Talmud.

Philip Augustus had persecuted the Jews out of avarice; Louis IX persecuted them out of piety. This state of affairs gave opportunity to the fanatic and the apostate. Here is a typical example:

A miscreant, Donin, who became baptized out of pique and took the name of Nicholas, slandered the Talmud, exaggerating its unguarded statements and charging it with antagonism towards Christians, with blasphemy and immorality generally. The whole Church was aroused and an investigation of the Talmud was begun. Again a "disputation" was arranged, in the year 1240; once more the Jews had to defend their traditions before a hostile tribunal. While nothing tangible was really proved against the Talmud, still all copies found in Jewish homes were confiscated and twenty-four cartloads burnt in Paris. The Jews mourned the loss of this literary treasure, that nourished their intellectual and spiritual nature, almost as sorely as a massacre of their brethren. The Talmud meant so much in their circumscribed, hunted life.

Jewish Physicians.

The next step taken by the clergy to discomfort the Jews was to debar their physicians, in whose hands the practice of medicine largely lay, from treating Christian invalids. This law by which bigotry was made to endanger life, together with other restrictions as to their hiring Christian servants and holding offices of trust, was passed in Beziers in 1246 and endorsed later in Southern France. The court also imposed a Jewish tax and a

Jewish badge. The saint-king gave himself needless concern as to the size, shape and color of this stigma of ignominy.

Still it is difficult to understand why the Church should pass a law so injurious to themselves as that against Jewish doctors—for they were really the teachers of such Gentile physicians as there were. Christians sat at the feet of Doctor Shem Tob of Tortosa—yet he only took up the study of medicine at the age of thirty and still distinguished himself in his profession, so strongly ran Jewish talent in this direction. Church councils notwithstanding, Louis IV's brother turned for succor to the oculist Abraham of Aragon, and others followed his example. (See note p. 204.)

The Fifth Crusade.

It was almost to be expected that Saint Louis would be the sort of monarch to be seized with the crusade mania (p. 128). So, in due process, of course, we find him taxing French Jews to equip his expedition. He had previously remitted the payment of all interest to Jewish creditors. But his crusading zeal had not spent itself till he had banished the Jews from his domains. So, while the motive for expulsion that inspired him was very different from that which impelled Philip Augustus, the result was just as deplorable for the Jews. That both monarchs readmitted them after a short exile is a significant tribute to the economic value that this harassed people rendered to the nation that smote them hip and thigh.

Moses of Coucy.

Under these hard conditions we cannot expect much literary activity among the Jews of France of the thir-

teenth century. Provence, in spite of changed conditions, continued to be a centre for Jewish culture. Yet it is pathetic to see how even those of the less cultured North devoted themselves to the study of the law if of nothing more. France of this dark day produced Moses of Coucy, who, in addition to his commentary on the Law, was a great preacher—a revivalist, we might say. For he carried his message into Spanish Israel, creating quite an awakening with his stirring words, bidding them live up to the spirit, as well as obeying the letter of hte Law. In the conflict around the "Guide" he took the Maimunistic side.

Here is a quotation from his writings:

"Those who lie freely to non-Jews and steal from them belong to the class of blasphemers; for it is due to their guilt, that, some say, the Jews have no binding law. If things go well with Israelites they should not lose their heads and forget God, and ascribe all successes to their own industry and skill (comp. p. 90).

"It is because man is half angel, half brute, that his inner life witnesses such bitter war between such unlike natures."

Jechiel of Paris, a Tosafist, expounded the Talmud to three hundred students until poverty, produced by repeated confiscations, closed the doors of his academy. In despair, Jechel emigrated to the East. Persistent suppression ultimately told and Jewish scholarship died out in France, overwhelmed by hostile influences.

By the time that Rudolph became emperor, France and Germany had changed places—the former being now in the ascendant. Alas! that this growing power was to be used against Israel, not for them. For France was for them more than any other country the land of *expulsion*. That word better than any other epitomises the

history of the Jews in France from the close of the twelfth century to the close of the fourteenth.

Philip le Bel, who ascended the throne in 1285, at times found it advantageous to protect the Jews against the encroachments of the clergy. But this came from no regard for them whatever, but simply part of his policy in his fight against the arrogant Pope Boniface VIII and the pretensions of the Church generally.

First Large Expulsion.

For, when it suited his purpose, he suddenly imprisoned his Jews, in 1306, confiscated their goods, houses, synagogues, and ordered their departure within a month, on the penalty of death. Craft was added to cruelty, for his officers were ordered to pounce upon them unawares, after six months' secret preparation. In this way he obtained the largest amount of spoil. It had not even the condonement of misguided fanaticism. The motive was solely greed, an opportunity to confiscate their property. It was wholly a "commercial" transaction, a piece of royal brigandage. It grew out of a quarrel between him and the German Emperor (Albrecht) as to whom the Jews "belonged." It was decided that these money-earning chattels were the Emperor's property—a legacy from Rome, their conqueror..

So he expelled these 100,000 Jewish souls all but naked—that is, they were allowed only to take their clothes and a day's living. Some stayed and became Christians, some stayed and became martyrs. This band of wandering Jews, arbitrarily reduced to beggary, sought homes near, if they could; far, if the must; a few went as far as Palestine; the feeble died on the way. It was also an intellectual loss. Famous schools of learning closed and the pupils scattered. One writes: "From the

house of study have they torn me. Naked was I forced as a young man to leave my ancestral home and wander from land to land, from people to people whose tongues were strange to me."

Three years later the beggared survivors were permitted to return by Philip's son, Louis X. The plea for their restoration came, not from the Jews, but from the people. According to Geoffrey of Bouillon, they were kinder creditors:

"Now may the God of all be praised, but if the Jews had lived in the kingdom of France many a Christian would have had great help, which they now have not." Again he wrote: "The Jews, in transacting such business, are much more good-natured than Christians now are."

It was their turn now to make conditions. They would pay 25,000 livres for their restoration, but must be permitted to collect their outstanding debts, of which they would give a third to the king. They insisted on the restoration of their synagogues, cemeteries and books. We are glad to record this idealizing touch.

On these conditions they were admitted for twelve years. But they must needs wear a badge—such was now the law of Christendom. Otherwise it was only petty persecutions of the clergy that prevented their life in France being a fairly happy one—for a while.

The Shepherd Uprising.

For, unfortunately, King Philip V was seized with the Crusade fever, too. Miracles approving the campaign were now discerned by the credulous masses. Soon forty thousand shepherds, led by two unscrupulous men, were marching through France, armed with primitive weapons. The usual massacre of Jews by the inflamed fanatics

marked the beginning of the crusade. So the old sickening details of wanton slaughter were repeated—in 1320. In the fortress of Verdun, where 400 took refuge, the tragedy of York Castle was repeated (p. 171). Nearly the whole Jewish communities of Toulouse, Bordeaux, Gascoigne and Albi were wiped out. Altogether, the obliteration of over one hundred and twenty congregations in France and Northern Spain is the record of the shepherd uprising.

As though their cup of bitterness was not full, another persecution arose in the year following. A number of lepers—shut out from society according to the usage of the age—wantonly poisoned the wells and charged the crime against the Jews, the popular scapegoat. This meant the burning of 5,000 innocents and the robbery and banishment of many more and ultimately the fining of the Jewish community, after their innocence had been discovered by the French King, Philip V.

Another Expulsion And Restoration.

As though to keep up the unbroken record of persecution, in 1322, under Charles IV, we find them expelled again. Many had already begun a voluntary exodus from this unhappy land. From then till 1359 there is no history of the Jews in France, for there were none in the country.

In the meantime France had met retribution on the battlefield of Poictiers, 1356. King John was taken captive and a period of anarchy, famine and impoverishment followed.

One more France turned to the Jews to revive its finances. They had become an economic necessity. Here was a mission, but not the exalted mission of Scripture "to bring light (not lucre) to the Gentiles."

Menasseh de Vesoul was the forceful coreligionist who now arranged with the dauphin and exiled king for Israel's second restoration.

The return was granted for twenty years, which was from time to time extended. They could settle in town or village, they could purchase house or land. There was, however, an immigration tax as well as an annual tax. Menasseh de Vesoul, always alert for the interests of his people, was appointed Receiver General and was responsible for the payment of Jewish taxes. Perhaps, too, he may be credited with helping to establish a rabbinical seminary in Paris. They were not to be amenable to the regular courts, but were subject to a special judiciary. This assured protection to their persons and property; on the other hand, a Jewish crime brought severe financial penalty both on the criminal and on the Jewish community to which he belonged. But Israel, as a whole, has always been made to suffer for the sins of its individual offenders. A certain autonomous jurisdiction was granted for punishment of misdemeanors among themselves.

These regulations were changed from time to time, modified by the swaying passions of the masses. For it must be remembered that privileges were as perilous as privations, rousing anew the bigoted animosity of clergy and people.

This was particularly true in the matter of Jewish trade, practically confined to finance. Jews were allowed to charge 80 per cent., hardly for their own benefit, but rather for that of the king, who used Jews as means of indirect and hidden taxation. But the harassed and infuriated people did not see the royal usurer, only the extortionate Jew, who occasionally imprisoned a reluctant debtor (p. 145). So the smouldering hatred needed but a

spark to produce a conflagration again. It came in the trifling affair of the Jews attempting to bring back an apostate to the fold. This incident, meeting the wave of persecution that was sweeping from Spain across the Pyrenees (to be recounted later), brought the climax.

Last Banishment From France.

It was banishment once more. In the year 1394, on the day of Atonement, the day selected by ancient Israel to declare the jubilee of liberty (Leviticus xxv) and restoration of homesteads, was chosen as the day to declare exile *from* homesteads of mediæval Israel. Charles VI tempered the blow; he gave time and permission for the collection of debts and protected the departing exiles.

Later monarchs continued to expel Jews from each new province they won from their barons—such as Champagne, Dauphine, Provence, Savoy.

So the Jew was wandering again, finding insecure homes in not very hospitable Germany, Italy and Spain. Some few remained, really at the request of the Gentiles among whom they lived. Let us be grateful for this "one touch of nature."

So, as Jewish history had closed in England in 1290, it now closes in France a hundred years later, not to reopen in either till the seventeenth century. A few lingered in both lands, but as they only lived secretly as Jews there is no story of them to tell.

Theme for Discussion:

We may judge the spirit of an age and the degree of its enlightenment by the books it bans or burns.

CHAPTER XXVII.

GERSONIDES AND ASHERIDES: A CONTRAST.

Levi ben Gerson.

Some years before the final expulsion, in Bagnol (Piedmont), in the Provence of Southern France, that old centre of Jewish culture, Levi ben Gerson (Gersonides) was born, in the year 1288. Rashba's prohibition against teaching science and philosophy to youth was then in force (p. 212). None the less in the face of this interdict, Gersonides was given a scientific training and indeed he specialized in science. The salvation of laws that are blunders is that they cannot always be enforced. We have so far seen that from the time of Mar Samuel of Babylonia up to the time of the French expulsion, almost every Jewish scholar was something of a physician and something of an astronomer. Gersonides was a good deal of both.

He added to the science of medicine by writing and discovery; and in astronomy he revised the conclusions of his day, exposed the defects of the Ptolemaic theory, that the sun moved round the fixed earth, and invented an instrument for scanning the heavens. This, by the way, was some three hundred years before the days of Galileo, who is credited with the invention of the first telescope for practical scientific use. Astronomers based their calculations on the observations of Gersonides. Pope Clement V. had the gist of this work translated into Latin, which meant giving it to the Christian world. The renowned astronomer Kepler tried hard to obtain a copy.

We must regretfully pass over his other literary activi-

ties—covering a period of twenty years, his biblical and Talmudic commentaries and his treatises on syllogisms, algebra and geometry, and come at once to his activity in philosophy. For his greatest achievement lay here.

Philosophy of Gersonides.

His chief work is called *Milchamoth Adonai* (wars of the Lord). This is simply a fanciful title taken from a Bible phrase.

His attitude was most daring. He would know the truth unhampered by any restrictions or previously accepted beliefs; undismayed by the possibility that the conclusions he reached might contradict some teachings of the Torah. Such is the only spirit in which the scholar can advance if he desires to know more of the realities of the universe. It is the attitude of the scientist rather than that of the theologian. It does not follow that, taking such a stand, one's discoveries will necessarily be heretical, sceptical or destructive. As a matter of fact those of Gersonides were really conservative and on the whole tending to indorse the Law. A philosopher of a later age, Descartes, reached positive belief through this same process.

More courageous in this respect even than Maimonides, he was also more democratic in his attitude towards philosophy. For Gersonides believed that science was not occult learning for the few, but a revelation possible for all.

Like most of the mediæval philosophers, he expressed his opinions on Divine Omniscience, Providence, Immortality, Prophecy, the Celestial Spheres, the Eternity of Matter. On all of these questions he differed somewhat both from Aristotle and Maimonides. We have room for

but a word here for his views on each of these great themes.

(A) *Divine Omniscience.* Does God only know universal truths as Aristotle said, or also particulars, as Maimonides claimed? Not quite in agreement with either, Gersonides said, God knows essentials and therefore he knows the good in each individual.

(B) *Providence.* This term for God's wise provision and care for all his creatures is not equally bestowed on all, according to Gersonides. He asserted all men are surveyed in different ways. But the higher man develops his soul, the nearer does he come under divine solicitude. Thus is it in our human power to vary the divine regard.

(C) *Immortality.* Here he distinguishes between the animal soul with which we are born and the imaginative soul, which we acquire, when stirred by the Universal Intellect. It is only the latter which survives the death of the body.

(D) *Prophecy* requires no supernatural gifts. It needs only moral and intellectual excellence.

(E) *Celestial Spheres.* Gersonides believed in two groups of natural laws. This left room for miracles. Like all scholars before the Renaissance, that period of great scientific discovery, he believed the spheres were conscious beings midway between God and man. He further posits an Active Intellect between the First Cause, God and these Celestial Intelligences.

(F) *Eternity of Matter.* This Aristotelian dictum he denies. But declares that the world once created by divine fiat, is endless. (For similar theories of Maimonides on D, E and F, see pp. 191-193.)

Gersonides flourished in troublous times. He was among the refugees expelled from France and witnessed the sufferings of his people under the Shepherd Uprising.

He wrote under difficulties, often lacking the needed books to revise his work. He says, "The woes of Israel are so intense that no mediation could remedy them." History rather disproves that sad conclusion. They *have* been worse and they have been remedied.

Asher ben Jechiel.

Persecution in another land drove into exile at the same time a scholar of a different type. This was Asher ben Jechiel pupil and successor of Meir of Rothenberg (p. 160). He flourished at the time of the savage Rindfleisch riots, named after the ringleader, in 1298, and the varied persecutions due to the anarchy and demoralization that followed the struggle for the German crown. Least concerned in the conflict, the Jews were among the greatest sufferers—those of Wurzburg and Neuenberg were destroyed. This devastation of Jewish communities reached as far as Austria. The new Emperor Albrecht of Austria put it down with a strong hand. But then so much of the mischief had already been done.

This persecution brought Asheri to Spain. His advent was big with consequence for Jewish learning and theology, but not altogether in a salutary way. It meant the transfer of narrow scholarship of Germany to liberal Spain. On recommendation of Solomon ben Adret, he was made rabbi of Toledo. He belonged to that exclusive school that interpreted Judaism in rigid and gloomy terms and looked with suspicion on all secular learning. Science was evil in his eyes and the Talmud all sufficient for education and religion. Asheri thanked God that he knew naught outside the Torah! So that which in Solomon ben Adret was a tendency, in Asheri was life's central motive. He more than seconded the former in his *cherem,* ban, against all scientific books, except those on

medicine, and against those who read them prior to the age of thirty (p. 212). This endorsement of that severe and narrow policy brought counter-excommunication from Jewish centres of scientific and philosophic culture. None the less, the conflict sowed discord in Israel and resulted naturally in discouraging even if it did not kill the broader intellectual activities of the Jews. For Asheri continued as the head of the Spanish community and issued many *Responsa*. His attitude towards religion and life stood in striking contrast to that of Gersonides, his contemporary in France. Yet the pity of it was that while the latter influenced his time but slightly, Asheri met a heartier response. He was enabled to exercise a species of censorship over all that was now written by a Jewish pen.

Asheri was a man who would leave no room for individual religious spontaneity. For example, if the Law commanded worship three times daily, he would permit no addition to the regulation. There it was stated—crystalized and final.

For the strengthening of that unbending attitude he compiled a terse summary of all practical usages from the Talmud, of which he was a consummate master. By this digest of law he would have Israel solely guided; for "this was the whole duty of man." Commentaries were written on the *Rosh* (named after his initials) and it gradually superseded the earlier summary of Alfassi (p. 71).

While Gersonides, the original scientist and daring philosopher, created no school, his slight influence dying wth him, Asheri transmitted his restricted conception of Judaism to his sons and it thus became perpetuated in Israel. From now on Jewish students were induced to forsake general culture and to concentrate all study on

Talmudic law. So the legalistic spirit hitherto confined to France and Germany spread through Spain and became the prevailing Jewish attitude, till the end of the 18th century.

Asheri's Ethical Teachings.

But though narrow theologically he was a man of fine principles ethically. The following quotation from Asheri's ethical will reveals his high moral standard:

"Avoid all dealings wherein there is a lie; utter not the name of God superfluously to no useful end, or in places dirty or defiled. Cut from under thee all mere human supports, make not gold the foremost longing of thy life; for that is the first step to idol worship, a heathen religion. Nay, rather wander in all humility before thy Creator, and where thou seest His will to be so, give up thy money at once. He can more than replace it. Rather give money than words; and as to ill words, see that thou place them in the scale of understanding before they leave thy lips. What hath been uttered in thy presence, even though not told as secret, let it not pass from thee to others.

Do not fix thy eyes too much on one who is far above thee in wealth, but on those who are behind thee in worldly fortune. Only in respect to the service and the fear of God look up to the great, and never to the insignificant. Take pleasure in being warned from wrong and set to right.

Put no one to open shame; misuse not thy power against any one. Do not struggle vaingloriously for the small triumphs of showing thyself in the right, and a wise man in the wrong; thou art not one whit the wiser therefor.

Be and remain grateful to anyone who hath helped thee to thy bread; be sincere and true with everyone, Jews and non-Jews; be the first to extend courteous greeting

to everyone, whatever be his faith; provoke not to wrath one of another belief than thine.

Never be violently angry with thy wife, and if haply thy left hand had repulsed her, let thy right draw her quickly to thy heart again. Before thou eatest, before thou goest to thy bed, occupy thyself for some set time with the Law, and let thy discourse at table be on matters which it contains.

Prayer is the soul's service to God.

Jacob bar Asher's Code of Law.

The most famous of Asheri's sons and perhaps more famous than the father, was Jacob bar Asher. In year 1340 he compiled a complete summary of Talmudic law in four parts (Arba Turim). Hence known as the *Tur*. Its divisions were:

Part I. *Orach Chayim* (Way of Life). Ritual laws.

Part II. *Yoreh Deah* (Teaching Knowledge). Regulations on things lawful and unlawful.

Part III. *Eben Haezer* (The Stone of Help.) Marriage and divorce laws.

Part IV. *Choshan Hamishpat* (Breastplate of Justice). Civil laws.

Briefer than the *Yod Hachezakah*, the summary of Jewish law of Maimonides, it was as complete, and included also some decisions of the Geonim and even of the Kabala. But while Maimuni gave a philosophic atmosphere to his Code by reasoning out the causes of many injunctions and by always bringing out the religious aim, Asherides gave a Code simply without question or inference.

Unfortunately, Israel chose, as it had so often chosen before, the work of lesser religious value. Certainly this Code supplied a want of the times for those at a dis-

tance, seeking information on civil and ritual law. But was such a code to answer life's great needs; did it feed the spiritual side of the Jew? Perhaps it did in so far as it cultivated a discipline of obedience and gave a conscientious sense of obligation fulfilled. Yet might not this discipline have been cultivated for observances, the ethical aim of which was more manifest? Who can say.

Concise in form this book became the guide of Israel for four centuries, largely replacing independent research. We might say it remade Israel after its likeness.

In the 16th century the *Tur* was modified and expanded up to date and was known as the *Shulchan Aruch* (Spread Table). This latter work continued the spirit of its predecessor—the spirit of Asherides.

Notes and References.

Gersonides:

His scholarly spirit was grander than his scholarly achievement. He lacked the persistent industry, the synthetic grasp of Maimonides to give to Judaism a complete philosophic system—he produced rather a philosophic critique. His conservative opponents satirized his work as "Wars *against* the Lord."

Asher ben Jechiel:

To regard the Bible and Talmud as all sufficient for religion and culture recalls the attitude of one type of Moslem, for whom all books outside the Koran were superfluous and dangerous. In the same spirit, Christian monks erased classic writings to use the parchment for their monkish chronicles. Modern scholars now attempt to decipher what has been erased below. This doubly-used parchment is called a *palimpsest.*

Theme for Discussion:

Why did Asherides exercise a greater influence on Judaism than Gersonides?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DAVID ALROY, MESSIAH.

Conditions in the Orient.

The East was still the Jewish centre of population, though no longer of learning or authority. Its academies were closed, and the lives of those who lived there were obscure. Jehuda Halevi and Nachmanides turned to Zion, but they were drawn to the beloved soil, sacred by its past, not dignified by its present association. It was adjudged a merit to spend one's declining years in the Holy Land. To some it is so still. The Jews of Jerusalem were noted now only as weavers and dyers. In Asia Minor and Palestine they left Christian centres to settle by preference under Moslem regime. The Holy Land was closed to them only while held by the Crusaders. Yet the later Caliphs of the East did not show the vigor and ambition of their predecessors, nor the thirst for learning of their Moslem brethren in the Peninsula. Possessing the vices of the Orient without its virtues, they were indolently satisfied to leave the administration of the State in the hands of their viziers. This often meant government by corruption and bribery, from which Jews suffered with the rest.

Resh Galutha of Bagdad.

In the 11th century, after the schools of Sora and Pumbeditha had been closed, we still find the bulk of Eastern Jews located between the Euphrates and the Tigris, with Bagdad, Akbara and Mosul (new Nineveh) as their chief

centres. Here they were left undisturbed, and Bagdad was permitted to reestablish the office of Resh Gelutha (or Exilarch) with all its associated pomp. His power of appointment of rabbis and judges reached from Persia to Yemen (Arabia); his sway even included the few Jews who had drifted as far as Thibet and India. The revival of the Exilarchate was followed by the reinstitution in Bagdad of a college and a Gaon. It was the ambitious Gaon, Samuel ben Ali, who crossed swords with Maimonides (p. 201). Mosul, with its seven thousand Jews, also had a local "Prince," but it manifested no desire for college or culture. The further one penetrated into the northern interior, the less learning did he find among the Jews. Loyal to the Faith in a blind and bigoted way, they knew it only as a transmitted tradition and hardly appreciated its grandeur. In the mountain wilds some even lived as robber bands, like the Ishmaelites of old.

In Khorasan the Jews were cattle breeders. Persia had large Jewish settlements in Ispahan, Hamadan and Susa; but those in Susa had dwindled away by the end of the 12th century. Their only points of importance in post-Mohammedan Arabia were Chaibar and Yemen. The merchants of the latter earned a reputation for benevolence. The bulk of Arabian Israel were in the North and many of these still lived the Bedouin life. All the communities scattered through Moslem Asia acknowledged the sway of the Exilarch of Bagdad. Each group developed local customs and local superstitions. They set great store on pilgrimages to supposed graves of great men, such as Ezekiel and Ezra.

Eastern Jews then were no longer making history. But an incident in the 12th century breaks the silence. A man emerges, a Messiah—David Alroy.

The Messianic Hope.

From the days of Bar Kochba's downfall in the year 135 A. C. E. (*T. Y.*, ch. xxix), the hope of the advent of a Messiah, who would restore the Jewish nation, had never died out, and no century has since passed without some individual rising from the ranks of Israel and claiming to be the long-awaited scion of the Royal House of David. The historian, Graetz, enumerates seventeen such Messiahs. Some were enthusiastic visionaries, some were only adventurers. The appearance of a claimant to this title was usually a consequence of local persecution. In no case has a self-styled Messiah brought relief to his community. In most cases he left behind a legacy of humiliation and usually aggravated the persecution he promised to remove (p. 199). None the less, the Messiah idea played a great part, not only in Jewry, but also in Christendom throughout the Middle Ages. It was woven into the mysticism of the Kabala, it was not absent from the creed of the rationalist Maimonides. Jewish speculation has varied widely as to the nature of the Messiah and as to the world changes he would bring about. Some theories were fantastically extravagant. Preceded by days of terror he was to be a man with miraculous gifts, whose coming was to be inaugurated with marvel and who would bring about spiritual redemption.

Some Messianic hopes again were sober and moderate. The Messiah of Maimonides is but a great king who will restore the Jewish nationality and who will render war obsolete.

Heralded by various portents, his advent was sometimes calculated to the year. The Karaites, among whom Messianic claimants had appeared in Syria and Persia (p. 35), looked for the genuine Redeemer at the end of the 10th century. A mystic told the Jews of Germany

THE OLD CEMETERY IN PRAGUE

that he would appear in the year 1100. A Kabalist and an astronomer of Spain had calculated it for the year 1358, while the Zohar fixed 1648 for his coming. The Messiah was daily looked for by the Jews of pre-Moslem Arabia, and a persecution in the East at the opening of the 9th century was interpreted as a precursor of his arrival. It was fondly expected by the Jews who suffered in the Almohades persecution (p. 180) that the advent of the Messiah would change their sorrow into joy. About the same time an enthusiast appeared, claiming to be the advance herald of his coming, the Elijah, so to speak, of the *Meshiach*.

David Alroy.

A word has been said of each Messiah as he has appeared in the course of this history. Something more than a word is deserved by David Alroy.

He was born in Almadia in Kurdistan, in 1160, thirty-four years before Nachmanides. In his youth the Cross was in combat with the Crescent for the tomb of Jesus in Jerusalem. It was the time of Richard Cœur de Lion and Saladin. The struggle brought trouble for the Jews and invited them once more to seek their own. Why should they remain in passive suffering while others fought for the land of their ancestry?

Alroy was a scholar, versed in Bible and Talmud, esteemed by Arabs as well as Jews. Seeing the Caliphate weakened from without and torn with dissension from within, he conceived the daring plan of announcing himself as the Messiah. He appealed to some Jewish outlaws of the mountains and to the Jewish warriors of Bagdad and Mosul to enter Almadia with concealed weapons and seize the fortifications. Many answered the

summons. The puerile attempt naturally met with the failure that the more sober expected. Alroy was soon in the hands of the Sultan, his crude army dispersed.

Now romance weaves legend into the story. As Samson broke from his foes, so Alroy had mysterious powers to set himself at liberty. Again he was in the midst of his followers who once more rallied round him. The Sultan offered the Jewish community a curt alternative. Either they must deliver him to the Caliph or all be put to the sword. The less credulous, led by the Exilarch, sought to save the perilous situation. Alroy was put to death by order of the local ruler and the Sultan appeased with a hundred talents of gold. What a sorry outcome!

But this does not quite end the story. Prior to Alroy's death, two adventurers took advantage of the prevailing excitement to play upon the credulity of the Jews of Bagdad. They induced them to part with their property and to wait on their roofs in green robes the appointed hour of departure for Jerusalem. They waited with a trust pathetic indeed. Although their eyes were opened to the deception only when it was too late, and in spite of the fact that Alroy was dead and with him the cause—a certain number continued to believe in his Messiahship, calling themselves Menachemites (a name for the Messiah), and still hoped for his glorious return. How history repeats itself!

The one question that interests us now is, Was Alroy an enthusiast or an adventurer? Many think that this ambitious man only decided to pose as a Messiah as an afterthought. Benjamin Disraeli has spun a romance out of the scant material of the story, but in this way has idealized the incident far beyond sober history. He incorporates in it the prowess of the warlike Jews of Khorasan against the Seljuk Sultan Singar in 1153. So

the incident closed, and the Jews of Asia again retired to their obscurity for three centuries more.

Notes and References.

Disraeli's "David Alroy":

This book makes delightful reading, and is rich in local color, but the gifted author is restricted in the authorities available to him on Jewish practice. But the description of Jerusalem contained in it is the vivid impresson of an eye witness, the result of Disraeli's personal visit to the land of his fathers.

Messiah and the Messianic Time:

This doctrine is accepted in different senses by the two schools of Judaism. Orthodox Jews look to a scion of the House of David, who will arise in some marvelous way and lead Israel back to the Holy Land. This national restoration will be followed by the world's acceptance of the one God and by the dawn of an era of peace and good will. The Reform Jews also look to the coming of just such a glorious day as the climax of man's earthly pilgrimage. But they believe that it will come about not suddenly or by marvel, but gradually and normally. Nor do they teach that this glorious era needs the special leadership of a Messiah nor of Israel's national restoration. They believe in the Messianic Time, not in the Messiah Man; in a Redemption, not in a Redeeemer.

See treatment of this subject in the concluding volume of this series, *Modern Jewish History,* pp. 120, 121.

Alroy—The Man of Rai or Rages:

The Messianic Idea in Jewish History, Greenstone, Jewish Publication Society, 1906.

Theme for Discussion:

The relation between the doctrine of the Messiah and Jewish nationalism.

BOOK V.

SPAIN'S IRON AGE.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Peninsula.

Alfonso X, Wise of Castile includes anti-Jewish laws in his code.....1257
Maria de Molina, regent 1312
Alfonso XI.....1325

Pedro the "Cruel"..1350
Henry II 1369
Jews deprived of criminal jurisdiction 1379
Jewish Massacre...1391
Maranos 1391
Alfonso's code put into operation....1408
Tortosa Disputation 1413

Union of Castile and Aragon 1474
Spanish Inquisition 1480
Columbus in Spain.1486
Granada, last Moorish stronghold, falls.....1491
Expulsion of Jews.1492
Discovery of America .....
Portuguese Inquisition 1551
Departure of Martanos from Portugal 1557
Jews settle in Brazil 1577

Germany and Poland.

Early Jewish Settlement in Poland 1098
Polish Charter 1264
Casimir the Great.1310
Armleder, persecution 1336

Golden Gift Pence.1342
Black Plague Persecutions 1348-51
Mayence Synod....1381
Prague Massacres.1389

Hussite Conflict, 1420-1434
Council of Basle Anti-Jewish Restrictions 1434
Jews Expelled from Augsburg..1439
Fall of Constantinople 1453
Jewish Privileges Revoked — Poland 1454
Simon of Trent Blood Accusation.1475

Jewish Contemporaries.

Hillel of Verona, b.1220
Kalonymos, b.....1265
Immanuel, fl.....1300
Dante, d.....1321
Jedaya Baderesi, fl.1300
Chasdai Crescas, b.1340
Isaac b., Sheshet, fl. 1380
Joseph Albo, b.....1380
Moses a Rieti.....1388

Synod of Bologna..1416

Abarbanel, b.....1437

Messer Leon, b....1450

Simon Duran.....1461

Elias del Medigo, b. 1463

Moses Kapsali, (Turkey), fl.....1463

(Pico di Mirandola, Christian devoted to Jewish literature), fl.....1480

Settlement of Jews in New Amsterdam (later New York) 1654

GOLDEN TOWER OF SEVILLE

BOOK V. SPAIN'S IRON AGE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CASTILE'S GATHERING STORM.

Before the close of the thirteenth century Castile was much the largest country in the Peninsula. We find the bulk of the Spanish Jews, perhaps as many as half a million, settled in Castile and in its newly-acquired provinces. The historian Kayserling enumerates about one hundred and twenty Jewish communities here.

Jews in State Offices.

Taking up the thread of the history where we last laid it down (ch. xxiii), we see Alphonso X, known as "the Wise," partly because of his Jewish astronomical tables, succeeded successively by Sancho IV, whose reign was kindly, but, alas brief; and he by Ferdinand IV. The latter protected the Jews against oppression of the clergy in his day and continued his father's policy of choosing a Jew as his treasurer—Samuel. But Samuel was a good deal more than that. He had a decided voice in the affairs of State. Indeed, this diplomat awakened the antagonism of Maria de Molina, that clever woman who became regent from 1312 to 1319. Her opposition to Samuel was wholly personal, for she also engaged a Jewish treasurer as well as a Jewish tax-collector, and a Jewish steward. The Kabalist, Todros Abulafia, had been both her physician and financier. Her good will was further demonstrated in the defense of her Israelitish subjects against new canonical laws, and though she lowered the legal rate of interest, she would not permit

the abolition of Jewish debts, though a popish bull sanctioned it.

But the growing antagonism of the Cortes of Castile was only too apparent, both in the restrictive laws they tried to pass as well as in those they succeeded in passing. Even this queen-regent found it prudent to discourage close intimacy between Jew and Gentile and endorsed the new law that Jewish men must no longer assume pretentious Christian names, nor Jewish women wear ornaments on their person. Such practices should not have been prohibited by the government nor desired by the Jews.

Prosperity had made the Jews indiscreet; prosperity was to hasten their downfall. The old security was gone. Foreseeing trouble in the distance, Jews began emigrating both from Castile and Aragon during the whole of the fourteenth century.

When Alphonso XI came to the throne in 1325 there was a surface improvement in Jewish conditions. Already as Infante he had chosen as treasurer Jehuda Ibn Wakhar, at whose request the right to punish their own offenders was still allowed to the rabbinate. It was not always wisely used by Ibn Wakhar, for he was under the severe and gloomy influence of Asheri. With this rabbi's endorsement, a blasphemous tongue was removed and the face of an immoral woman disfigured.

Even Alphonso's protection of the Jews against the spreading antagonism was ultimately disastrous. When he chose Joseph Benveniste as his treasurer, it simply deepened the jealous hatred against a people who had become so successful. It looks as though Israel's success would mean their disaster. When the Christians had been few and weak in Spain and the Moors many and strong, the former had been friendly enough to the Jews;

but as the Moors steadily receded under the triumphant advance of Christian arms, the clergy made no effort to conceal their hatred of the Jews and began openly to foment the passions of the populace against the wealth and influence of these "enemies of Christ." When a quarrel arose between Joseph Benveniste, the royal treasurer, and Samuel Ibn Wakhar, the royal physician, both were accused of enriching themselves at the royal expense. The former died in prison, the latter under torture.

Although the timely financial aid of Jews in a war with Granada retained them in the royal favor, and Gonzalo Martinez, a later Haman, who would have wiped out all Israel, met Haman's fate and was executed, still—even Alphonso favored their conversion, cancelled a quarter of their outstanding debts, and forbade their practice of lending money at high rates of interest.

Pedro the Cruel.

Alphonso XI died of the black plague and was succeeded by his son, Pedro, in the year 1350, at the early age of sixteen. He was called "the Cruel," though the Jews found him kind. Nicknames were often given then for accidental reasons that were not always a reflex of true character. Pedro's was a sad story of neglected childhood, a struggle against the conspiracies of his half-brother and the arrogant grandees of the realm, which ultimately broke out into civil war. Forced into an uncongenial marriage with a Bourbon princess, he neglected her and thus earned the enmity of her house.

The common people and the Jews were his staunch friends. For them he was Pedro the Just. A Jewish poet, Santob de Carrion, wrote in his honor some dedi-

catory verses, "Counsels and Lessons." Pedro made Samuel Levi his treasurer, advisor and confidential companion. Levi succeeded in increasing the royal revenues and acquired immense power. He built a synagogue in Toledo, still existing—as a church (p. 58). Pedro also chose a Jewish physician and astrologer and would not listen to those who asked him to abolish the right of Jewish jurisdiction in their own affairs. Surrounding himself by Jews, the Spanish spoke derisively of his "Jewish court."

Turn of fortune brought Samuel Levi's downfall, but the Jews remained loyal to their king. This meant that his enemies became theirs. Pedro's imprisonment of his wife alienated much sympathy and his relatives became his most bitter opponents. As his friendliness to the Jews was regarded as an offence in itself, they became involved in the tragedy of his home.

Civil War and Jewish Massacre.

In the civil war that followed, Don Henry, his illegitimate brother and conspirator for the throne, was supported by the "White Company," under Bertrand de Guesclin—a band of mercenaries. But most fighting was done by hired mercenaries in those days. Savagely did they glut their lust for Jewish blood when in 1355 they invaded the Juderia (Jewish quarter) of Toledo. For the moment Henry was conqueror and Pedro routed; but his cause was endorsed by the "Black Prince" of England, and it became Henry's turn to flee, only to return again with the departure of the "Black Prince" and become the final conqueror.

The Jews were loyal to Pedro to the last and had to pay dearly for their staunch allegiance both in money and blood—for the insurgents on both sides indiscrimi-

nately destroyed many of their communities. Henry, particularly, wreaked his enmity on them just because they were the royal favorites, putting two or three communities to the sword. Samuel Levi died on the rack, his vast fortune confiscated. In the siege, the Jews of Toledo suffered all the unspeakable horrors of famine. Nearly eight thousand perished. The tax imposed upon the survivors was practically spoliation, and Toledo, the Jerusalem of the West, did not contain as many hundred souls at the end of the reign of Henry as it had contained thousands at the beginning of the reign of Pedro. Those of Burgos had to sell the Torah ornaments to pay the fine imposed by Don Henry. The Jewish massacres continued till 1366. The hapless Pedro was slain. At his death the Pope said: "The Church must rejoice at the death of such a tyrant, ally of Jews and Moors." What a picture of the times that kind of condemnation reveals!

Alas, the golden age of Spain was over. Henry II, the fratricide, became king in 1369. From this time on intermittent persecution marks the history of Israel in Spain till its close. The usurper taxed the already plundered Jews to pay his mercenaries. They were to be imprisoned and tortured until they paid. Loyalty to Pedro came high! Yet, how strange that even King Henry found it advisable to engage some of the very people he had spurned and slain as financial advisers and tax-collectors—so valuable was their expert service to the State. Aye, he who had begun this war largely as a campaign against the Jews, later expressed his admiration for their fidelity. So, while following his own wishes, Joseph Pichon was made the chief tax-collector and Samuel Abarbanel was appointed to another financial post; yet, yielding to the clergy, he forced the Jews into religious "disputations," and yielding to the Cortes, he imposed the

hated badge, which they had resisted since its first institution in 1215.

Later Scholars.

The intellectual decline of Castilian Israel was almost as sad as that of their fallen fortunes. It was due in part to the crusade against science and philosophy by the anti-Maimunistic school from within the fold and in part to the social and political difficulties from without. Yet Spain produced a few great scholars before the night shut down on Jewry. It is pleasing to turn for a while from these scenes of hostility and rapine to the scholarly quiet of the study. Here the Jew found his truer function.

Two scholars in particular were Isaac ben Sheshet and Chasdai Crescas, both of whom were born in Aragon. They were recognized as the Jewish authorities of their times in Spain, France and adjacent lands.

Isaac ben Sheshet belonged in spirit to the circle of Ben Adret, of whom he was a disciple, though he was not an opponent of secular study or of broad culture. He was an authority on rabbinic law first and last. He was rabbi of Saragossa till 1391 and rabbi of Algiers, his place of refuge, after that fatal year. From this severely rigid, but thoroughly upright man, we have a collection of 417 *Responsa,* many of which were incorporated in the *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Law) of a later day (p. 253).

Chasdai Crescas, by far the greater scholar, was born in Barcelona in the year 1340. Socially he was a man of wealth in close relation with the Court, and was consulted by the grandees of the State. A man of deep faith, he wrote a polemic against Christianity, really an *apologia* (defense) for Judaism. We have seen Jewish scholars for the most part fall into two groups—interpreters of

the Law and expounders of philosophy. Crescas, like Maimonides, was both. It was rather remarkable at that time when the lines between the traditional and rationalistic schools were being so tightly drawn, to find a man a great Talmudist and at the same time a great philosopher. His chief work was *Or Adonai* ("Light of the Lord").

We have space here only to outline the six fundamental doctrines of Judaism that he regards as presupposed by revealed faith: Divine omniscience; Providence; divine omnipotence; prophecy; freedom of will; purpose of the world's creation:—

(1) *God's Omniscience:* His knowledge differs in kind as well as degree from that of man, so that we cannot draw inference one from the other. (We might quote here the words of Isaiah, "as high as the heavens are above the earth so are the ways [knowledge] of God above the ways of man.") But, declares Crescas, God's knowledge of the future does not affect human free-will.

(2) *Providence* reaches all God's creatures. It involves rewards and punishments and a hereafter. Even punishment shows God's love, for it is salutary.

(3) *Omnipotence:* God's power is infinite, even to the extent of being unhampered by natural law. Hence Crescas found no difficulty in believing in miracles. He with all Jewish philosophers accepts the doctrine "creatio ex nihilo" (creating all things out of nothing). This was, as already pointed out, distinctly opposed to the teaching of Aristotle of the eternity of matter.

(4) *Prophecy:* Prophecy was the highest degree of human intellectuality. Communion with God is reached by love rather than by knowledge. He makes the same statement with regard to immortality and human perfection.

(5) *Freedom of will* is limited by the law of causation which we can never escape. Yet we are responsible creatures. Freedom of choice is ours to a degree. The will operates as a free agent when considered alone, but in relation to remote causes acts by necessity.

(6) *Creation's purpose:* The recognition of purpose and final aim in the universe is not philosophy's concern, but it is the supreme concern of religion. Crescas declares that the purpose of the world's creation is human happiness. It is the soul's striving after union with God, which continues with still deeper intensity in the life beyond.

Chasdai Crescas was a kind and loyal friend in times of need. When the dark days came, the weak found in him a staunch defender. All his energies were devoted to mitigate the disasters of 1391. Of these disasters he was an eye witness and chronicler, and in them he lost his son. To their sad narration we shall presently come.

We may pass quickly over the series of events that culminated in that black year, of which we may say with Job, "may it be blotted from the calendar; let the darkness of the shadow of death claim it for its own."

The Censure of Alami.

The steady decline of the secure position of the Jews and the introduction of repressive laws under clerical compulsion grew more rapid as they advanced. Possibly opposition to the Jews was not wholly sectarian. Their wealth awakened jealousy and the ostentation of some may have deepened a popular aversion already there. A moralist of the time, one Solomon Alami, speaks scathingly of these failings of Spanish Israel. He tells of their palaces, their gorgeous equipages, their rich apparel,

their singers and their dancers, the idleness of their leisure classes, their neglect of Jewish study, and the avoidance of the rabbinate in the choice of careers for their children.

It is true that this kind of denunciation can be brought with more or less truth against the leisure classes in society of all ages. It is also true that the wealthy and ostentatious were the few while the humble were the many, none the less it would indicate that prosperity had not left the Spanish Jews unspoiled, and that these mild frailties exaggerated by clerical slander into grave sins, might easily apply the explosive spark to a smouldering animosity. When we turn to the domestic life of the Spanish Jews, they stand in favorable comparison with their surroundings. Certainly the rabbis of the synagogue were pure-minded men while, according to its own chroniclers, the priests of the Church were venal and their corrupting influence was dangerously affecting the masses.

Deprived of Criminal Jurisdiction.

An unfortunate instance now occurred showing that the Jews occasionally abused the criminal jurisdiction granted them, which included the carrying out, with the royal sanction, of the death penalty. This power had once or twice before been taken from them, perhaps because not impartially used. In 1379, Joseph Pichon, of Seville, became embroiled in a dispute with some Jewish courtiers jealous of his power. The Jewish court obtained consent from the new king for his execution as a traitor, but without mentioning his name. He was accordingly put to death. Although the charge may have been true, the high-handed procedure created a bad im-

pression in Seville and awakened the indignation of the king. The parties concerned were executed; criminal jurisdiction was taken from the Jewish courts, never more to be restored.

Some of the old Visigothic restrictions of pre-Moslem days (*T. Y.*, ch. xxxix) were now revived and imposed. With their institution the change of the status of the Spanish Jew from one of honor and security to one of humiliation and danger was rapid. By the latter part of the fourteenth century their condition in Castile was hardly better than that of their brethren in Germany; but with this important difference. The status of the German Jews never had been enviable. It was always one of sufferance and subjection. They expected repression and adapted themselves to it. But the best of the Spanish Jews were the social and political leaders—an aristocracy, people of means, culture and commanding position. To strip them of all public prestige, to keep them at arm's length, by law, to put a badge upon them, to bait them in the streets, to speak of them contemptuously in the pulpits—meant humiliation almost insupportable. Not only that, but even their lives were no longer secure in the public highways. Lawless attacks upon Jews and their property came to be the order of the day. Kings could no longer engage them as their treasurers, even if they would.

1391.

The climax of catastrophe came with the frenzied anti-Jewish preachings of a bigoted priest, Ferdinand Martinez, who soon had a mob behind him, thirsting for Jewish blood. At the death of Juan in 1390, a mere boy became king, and a condition of disorder consequently prevailed. The demagogue took advantage of the un-

settled situation to launch his most terrific onslaught. It was on March 15, 1391, that he openly urged the mob to attack the Jews. The Council of Regents appealed to, could do little to quell passions so inflamed—they could but delay the attack some three months. Then the storm burst.

The Jewish quarter of Seville was burnt, four thousand souls were slain, and the majority spared only by baptism. Cordova became a shambles and fanatic hatred turned men into brutes. Women and children were sold into slavery, and synagogues were turned into churches. The robbery and plunder spread through Spain from Jaen to Toledo, from Ecija, whose archbishop was chief instigator to Burgos—seventy communities in all. Only fear of armed reprisal prevented a similar massacre of the Moors, that had been contemplated.

The contagion of fanaticism soon spread and the same fate was meted out to Jews in Valencia, Navarre, Catalonia, Majorca and Aragon, and the same story repeated —the minority was slain, the majority saved by conversion. Many were spared by the sacrifice of their wealth. In Barcelona, Chasdai's son was one of the martyrs. For three months savagery wielded the sword. Portugal alone was spared by the energy of the king.

So the proud Spanish Jews were brought down to the dust, and all anti-Jewish laws were now carried out with new severity. It is true that Aragon punished some marauders, but Castile canonized the instigator. Some Jews took refuge in Moorish Spain, in Malaga, Almeria and Granada.

But this was not the worst. Those Jews, now forced to a life of disguise and known as Neo-Christians or *Maranos,* became a menace to the Church as well as to

the Synagogue, and were the indirect cause of the ultimate expulsion of the Jews from Spain.

Notes and References.

Jewish Influence:

The power of the Jews of the Peninsula prior to this time is indicated by the fact that a king lost the Portuguese crown by refusing to appoint as the chief rabbi of Castile a candidate of the queen-regent, Leonora.

Crescas:

Crescas was neglected by the Jews generally, but a popularization of his work by Joseph Albo was largely studied. The acceptance of the imitation and the neglect of the original master recalls the similar experience of Ibn Janach as against Kimchi. (See page 142.)

Jewish Astronomers:

Just as Alfonso X's "wisdom" was due to Don Zag's astronomical tables, so his royal nephew, Juan Manuel, reaped the credit of another Jew's wisdom—Moses Zacuto.

"Light of the Lord":

The aim of this work was to liberate Judaism from bondage to the Aristotelian School. In this respect Crescas is an ally of conservatism as against Maimonides and Gersonides. But unlike the anti-Maimunists, who condemned philosophy as such, he met his opponents on their own ground and fought them with their own philosophic weapons. We might compare him to Saadyah (ch. iv), who also defended the conservative point of view on philosophic grounds in the days when the Karaites were the rationalists.

Theme for Discussion:

Contrast the opinions of Gersonides and Crescas on Omniscience, Providence and Prophecy.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BLACK PLAGUE.

We turn again to Central Europe, no longer standing in unfavorable contrast with Spain. The Jews now encountered an inhospitable and hostile spirit in all Christian nations.

Were we to single out one century darker than the rest that were already so dark for German Israel, it would be the fourteenth—for then extortion and massacre followed fast upon each other, with short intervals of peace.

The "Armleder" and Other Persecutions.

We have seen in the time of Meir of Rothenberg that persecution drove the Asherides from Germany to Spain. It was a time of civil war and anarchy for German States. In 1336-37 two noblemen!—mark the term (such were the usual ringleaders in days of outlawry—started yet another anti-Jewish crusade. With leather on their arms, hence called *Armleder,* they incited the passions of five thousand peasants to avenge the wounds of Jesus! These were "avenged" in Alsace and the Rhineland. Were they never to be healed?

When the impulse was not bigotry it was avarice. Emperor Louis V, the Bavarian, devised a new means of squeezing money from the Jews. He imposed the "golden-gift pence," in 1342, an annual tax of one florin, on each Jewish soul in the German Empire above the age of twelve and possessing twenty florins or more. This

was but another variation of the much-utilized theory that the Israelites were a property inheritance from ancient Rome.

The people of Deckendorf, Bavaria, freed themselves of their debts to Jews by declaring that they had desecrated the host—the host protesting by miraculously shedding blood! The ringing of a church bell was the signal for putting them all to the sword. The place became henceforth a shrine for pilgrimage. Thus was crime confused with piety.

The Black Plague.

Instances such as these of which many more occurred throughout the Empire all pale into insignificance before the grand tragedy—sequel of the Black Plague. Well might Israel have cried with the Psalmist, in the day of pestilence, "Let me fall into the hand of the Eternal for his mercies are abundant; but into the hand of man, let me not fall."

The Black Plague was brought west to Europe probably by sailors from central Asia, through the trade routes, via Russia and Italy, whence it spread through all Europe, carrying death in its train. During the three years of its ravage, 1348-1351, its victims numbered, it is said, though hardly credible, twenty-five million souls. Its ravage was increased "by the unsanitary condition of the crowded towns and the wretched mode of living of the poorer classes." In some regions whole populations were wiped out, crops rotted and flocks wandered unattended.

So far the evil was terrific enough in all conscience, yet man tried to be more cruel than Nature. Looking ever upon the Jew as the source of all evil, the rumor spread, almost as swiftly as the pestilence, that they had caused the plague by poisoning the wells. The awful

GHETTO OF NICKELSBERG.

slander gained steady credence in Christendom—though not in Moslem lands. These enemies of mankind, it ran, had induced their doctors of the "black art" to concoct a diabolic poison, to drop it in the wells and rivers whence Christians drank and thus to scatter death among them!

Owing to their more abstemious habits and keener sense of family devotion, the plague's ravages among Jews were not as great. But this partial immunity only strengthened the slanderous belief and meant their far greater loss by fire and sword in the end.

Certain Jews were seized, placed upon the rack and tortured until they declared that they and their brethren were guilty of the charge. But why, it will be asked, if they were innocent? Because, under excruciating torture, it is a demonstrated experience that people can be induced to declare anything, however monstrous, that seems to satisfy the tormentor. These "confessions," made broadly public, were followed by the extermination of entire Jewish communities by fire and sword. Massacres occurred in Switzerland, Belgium, France, but chiefly in Germany; in Spain hardly at all—it was before 1391. Pope Clement VI (patron of Gersonides) issued a bull against these murders—for such they were—declaring the innocence of the Jews and even demonstrating the folly of the charge. The German Emperor added his protest. But it was of little use at a time when the ravages of the plague had already demoralized society.

The torture, the condemnation and the burning alive went on with horrible monotony from one Swiss town to another, each giving precedent and excuse to the next for the barbaric procedure. In some cases burning was remitted for perpetual exile. The Flaggelants—a fanatic order, who flogged themselves in frantic frenzy and

thought it piety—fostered the bigotry of the mob and its lust for blood.

In some cases Jews were deliberately put to death for sordid plunder, their records being burnt to canceal outstanding debts. One writer, in fact, declares: "Their goods were the poison which caused the death of the Jews."

Wholesale Slaughter in German States.

In Germany here and there a burgomaster, a sheriff, the councils of Cologne and Strassburg, did not "follow the multitude to do evil," being wise enough to see the absurdity of the accusation and humane enough to register their abhorrence. But Basle built a house on an island in the Rhine in which it first imprisoned and then set fire to its Jewish inhabitants. What a transformation this fanatic delusion had worked on otherwise law-abiding, and presumably pious citizens. Freiberg burnt its Jews at the stake, getting first a list of their creditors, to enrich the community with the outstanding debts. Some Jews of Speyer anticipated the holocaust by self-slaughter. This had become a familiar but no less terrible precedent. Strasburg, after deposing its humane Council, roasted alive two thousand Jews in their own cemetery. Those of Worms, the oldest Jewish community in Germany, those of Oppenheim and Frankfort, seeing death inevitable, cheated their remorseless persecutors by setting fire to their homes. In Mayence they dared commit the unpardonable offence of defending themselves, killing two hundred of their savage persecutors; it meant their own complete destruction. Six thousand was the death-roll there! Three thousand in Erfurt. In their prosperous centre at Nuremburg, on the Jüdenbühl, the awful

human sacrifice was repeated. Austria and Bavaria recorded the same shocking chronicles.

Did ever the unholy alliance of ignorance and hate produce such abnormities! To think that communities should commit such deeds and call themselves human, to think that a people should suffer such deeds and survive!

Poland alone, one of the Jewish lands of refuge, showed some instincts of humanity. Yet even here ten thousand were slain, the government being unable to stem the mad tide.

When the ravage was over, of Germany's three hundred and fifty Jewish communities, but *three* of importance remained.

Some towns, in spite of vows of perpetual banishment, invited exiled Jews to return—less out of humanity, than out of interest. For they keenly felt the loss of inhabitants so industrious and enterprising. They already saw that the commercial framework of society greatly depended upon this intelligent people.

Synod of 1381.

The Black Plague's sequel brought other internal consequences to long-suffering Israel. Family records were destroyed, and in 1381 it became necessary to call a synod at Mayence to readjust their affairs. Among old decisions endorsed were—that the childless widow should be granted "chalitza" (release) without quibble or delay. This ancient law made it necessary for the childless widow to go through the ceremony of "release" from her brother-in-law before she could remarry, hence called Levirate law (Levir, Latin for brother-in-law). For the earliest form of this law see Deut. xxv:5-10.

The tragedy also brought an intellectual decline. Plague

and massacre, the natural and the human scourges, had made havoc in the ranks of rabbinical savants. Superficial men became rabbis, lacking even the title *Morenu* (our teacher).

Demoralization in the Church.

The Church also was in a bad way. The papacy temporarily established at Avignon was a centre of intrigues, conspiracy and corruption. The revolt sooner or later must come. Naturally its clergy "bettered the instruction" of their chiefs and were openly immoral. They also sanctioned all sorts of enormities on unoffending Jews, whom they styled "outcasts of God."

So the story of loot and massacre went on from place to place and from year to year with here and there a short lull. In 1384, Nordlingen wiped out its Jewish community. In Augsburg they were mulcted of 20,000 florins. On the way to a synod convened at Weissenfels, in 1386, a number of rabbis, granted "safe-conduct," were waylaid by robber barons, and imprisoned. They were only released on payment of a ransom. The plea of the marauders that Jews deserved no protection and that it was always a duty to slay the "enemies of Christ" was all-sufficient to pardon the robbers. In 1389, in Prague, on a slanderous charge of priests that Jewish children had desecrated the host—a general massacre followed. Again had Israel to repeat that awful ordeal, slaying its nearest and dearest to escape worse horrors. A condemnatory papal bull brought no relief. Emperor Wenceslaus laughed at a Jewish appeal, seized their property and continued to tax and despoil them. In 1399, we find Jews imprisoned again because an apostate declared that the prayer *Alenu* cast an indirect slur on the followers of

Jesus of Nazareth (see note). Its net result was more martyrdom. So the cry went up to heaven: "How long, O Lord, how long?"

Thus the fourteenth century began and ended in the martyrdom of the witnesses of God.

Notes and References.

The Plague:

Had Jews been living in England in 1660, its great plague might have been laid at their door.

Read "Dance to Death," Emma Lazarus, in *Songs of a Semite,* a story of burning the Jews in Nordhausen in 1349.

Alenu:

A prayer of adoration near the close of a Jewish service, named from its opening words. "It is incumbent on us to praise the Lord of all."

See article in *Jewish Encyclopedia,* vol. i.

Theme for Discussion:

The Jew as a scapegoat for the world's woes.

CHAPTER XXXI.

UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE PAPACY.

Better Treatment in Italy.

While ecclesiastics persecuted Jews in all European lands, it is remarkable that in the very heart of Christendom, in Italy, they were left comparatively untaxed and undisturbed. Perhaps because the people were "more pious than the Pope." Perhaps also because they saw the papacy, its fallibility and its worldliness at closer range, so that it could not exercise that awe of distance experienced in other lands. But the most probable reason for Israel's better treatment there was due to Italy's superior culture. It is true that Jews were expelled from Bologna in 1171 and that a pope's sister who wished to expel them from Rome on the charge of their insulting the cross, had to be appeased with twenty thousand ducats—but these were in the nature of exceptions to a tolerant rule. The early holders of St. Peter's chair found it politic to humiliate Jews at a distance and convenient to engage as financiers and physicians those near at hand. Italian Jews made a good record and proved themselves deserving of the equal status with their neighbors given them in the courts.

In spite of these favorable conditions, Italian Jews had contributed little to Jewish literature up to the thirteenth century. Yechiel Kalonymos became a Talmudic authority; Joab ben Solomon added to the Liturgy. But these sparse swallows hardly made a literary summer. It was really the visit of Abraham Ibn Ezra, in the twelfth century (p. 114), that first stirred the sleeping community into life. Many of his works were

written in Mantua, Lucca and Rome. He unlocked Arabic literature to them with a Hebrew key; and he left behind him disciples to continue the good work of spreading Jewish knowledge.

Italian Jews were settled mostly in the South, the Northern trade centres fearing their competition. Venice and Rome were their largest communities. In Naples they found an appreciative environment and its well-disposed king, Roger, transplanted some Greek Jews from Messina to introduce the breeding of silk worms.

Frederick II, who became emperor in 1212, induced Anatoli, of the Tibbon family of Provence, to settle in Naples and translate Arabic philosophy into Hebrew, for that was an easy step to the Latin. Many of the clergy studied Hebrew. In this way, the commentary on Aristotle of the great Arabian philosopher, Averroes (Ibn Roshd), became known to the Christian world. Anatoli also introduced the study of Maimonides through Hebrew translation, to Jew and Gentile.

A Jewish Renaissance.

But it was the physician, Hillel, of Verona (born 1220), who did most to foster a spirit of learning among Italian Jews. He translated a Latin work on surgery into Hebrew. So with the appearance of some additional scholars and the translating of some scientific works, a spirit of learning began slowly to develop in Italian Jewry; and, side by side, with an increase in their prosperity.

The Jews were not unnaturally affected by the growing spirit of liberty, political and intellectual, all around them—and the general fostering of art, science and poetry in Italy, the land of the Renaissance. King Rob-

ert of Naples, one of the most powerful of Italian princes, sat at the feet of Jewish scholars. This monarch was a patron of Shemarya of Crete and induced him to write a commentary on the Bible. Shemarya considered this scholarly atmosphere propitious for a reconciliation between Rabbanites and Karaites. But the latter body had ceased to grow, and reconciliation was coming about naturally by absorption.

So the growing love of scholarship, the translations of the best in science and philosophy and the patronage of learning by the well-to-do, after the fine Spanish precedent, were all blossoms of promise that brought forth its fruit at last.

Italian Jewry now produced many poets, chief of whom were the two great satirists Kalonymos and Immanuel. (It is the function of this type of critic to reveal the foibles of his age.) Through their pages we see the very human side of their prosperous brethren.

Kalonymous.

Kalonymous ben Kalonymos was a protégé of that famous patron of Jewish litterateurs, King Robert of Naples. He was not an Italian but a Frenchman, born in Arles, in 1287; but he settled in Rome and did his chief work there. He contributed his share to the work of translation from Arabic into Hebrew, and also at King Robert's request, from Hebrew into Latin. He translated works on philosophy, mathematics and medicine. His ethics in fact is a partial adaptation of an Arabic original. His great satiric work was "Touchstone," in which he mirrors his age. Here, too, we get a contemporary picture of the persecution of his coreligionists in his native country, France, through the attacks of shepherds and the calumnies of lepers (pp. 242-3).

But banter is his prevailing temper. Here are a few examples of his trifling mood:

THE BURDEN OF JEWISH OBSERVANCE ON A MALE.

Its many laws and regulations,
Which are unknown to other nations,
Every Hebrew must observe
With watchful eye and straining nerve,
E'en though he shares in public functions,
He still must follow their injunctions,
Which I would tell you have been seen
To be six hundred and thirteen.

* * *

For he must shun all jest and play,
And brood o'er folios night and day,
Mosaic and Rabbinic lore,

* * *

And if in an enlightened age
He'd fain become a cultured sage
He must cram full his suffering head
With languages, alive and dead,
With ethics, logic and philosophy,
Astronomy also and theosophy,
And cabalistic learning, too,
And history, old as well as new,
And fill his overloaded brain.

* * *

Oh, heavenly Father, who—'tis told —
Didst work great miracles of old,
How truly grateful I should be
If thou hadst but created me
A girl devoid of worldly care,
And blessed with beauty ripe and rare.

* * *

From early morn till late at night,
Where shine the moonbeams' silvery light,
I'd spend the hours in peaceful knitting,
Contented to be ever sitting
Amidst a busy, smiling crowd
Of girls that sing and laugh aloud.

When nights were dark, we'd talk together
Of dress and bonnets and the weather,
And then we'd gossip, too, apace,
And end the evening's conversation
With jests, and tales of sweet flirtation.

* * *

Yet will I bear with patient grace
What still befals the Jewish race,
And not forget those wondrous pages,
Composed of old and worthy sages,
Wherein 'tis said that we must bless
Heaven, in woe and happiness.

Here is an instance where he sounds a more serious note in the same work, "Touchstone":

A Metaphor on Life.

The world is like the vast endless sea, upon which there floats a small and fragile little boat—namely, man. It is of artistic make and form, and looks as if it were the work of a master-hand. It is steered by the power of the divine spirit that directs its course, and keeps it constantly moving onward and onward, together with its heavy load of cargo—that is, man's action during life. After having started from the coast where it first came into existence, it moves ever forward till it reaches the opposite coast, where there lies a new realm called Eternity, which consists of vast regions that shine with eternal light and splendor, and also others that are enveloped in everlasting darkness.

His Purim parody so shocked the rabbis, serious and severe, that they forbade its reading. They may have further considered unorthodox his plea contained in it that the *Megillah* (Book of Esther) should be read in the language of the country so as to be understood by the majority. So we see that the problem of prayer in Hebrew or in the vernacular, faced that age, too.

Yet Kalonymos, in his "Letter of Response," discourages too daring a criticism of the Bible. He like-

wise takes occasion elsewhere to warn his wealthier brethren against extravagance and display. We met this same warning by Alami in Spain (p. 270). He died in 1337.

Immanuel.

Kalonymos' greater contemporary, Immanuel di Roma, was born about the same year as Dante (1265). He received the broad education we have seen given in Spain and the Provence—that is to say, it comprised rabbinics, mathematics and astronomy, philosophy, medicine and versification. What was less usual, he acquired a knowledge of Greek and Latin. All of this he supplemented by wide and varied reading.

He was a man of means, who held in the Roman community an office something like that of a congregational president. But what is a little more surprising in a man of his cast of mind, occasionally he even occupied the pulpit. He wrote a commentary on the Scripture, like so many Jewish scholars of that day. Here he took occasion to plead for a more general culture, claiming that every science was originally Jewish. But, as Bible expounder and grammarian, his work was like a hundred others. Immanuel was a poet, and only as a poet will he be remembered.

We must contrast him rather than compare him with the Spanish poets, for their tone was always lofty and their theme nearly always religious. Immanuel was a humorist and looked at life's playful side. Like the later Heine, his muse was Hellenic rather than Hebraic, notwithstanding that Hebrew was its medium. He wrote novels, riddles and epithalamia; but then so did Jehuda Halevi—but, oh, the gulf of difference! He shocked even while he entranced. He had his serious moments,

and in them he wrote hymns and prayers, some of which found their way into a local liturgy.

But, on the whole, we can hardly blame the *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law) for forbidding the reading of his poems. He not only adapted to the Hebrew the Italian rhyme of alternate lines, he also adapted in his tone, the Italian levity.

Dante, the greatest poet of the Middle Ages—whose dialect became Italian and all other dialects patois—was his friend; but in some respects Boccaccio seems to have been his model. He wrote mainly in Hebrew, and for the Hebrew, but even among Italians his Italian poems ranked high.

He moved among the young and liberal spirits of Italy, among those who were breaking away from the old Church thraldom and fathering the modern spirit of *Humanism.* (See concluding volume, *Modern Jewish History.*)

Unwisely trusting a friend, he lost his wealth. His heresies, condoned while rich, were now scathingly condemned. He lost his position of head of the community and wandered forth a poor, broken-down exile.

Kindly received in the home of a friend, he was induced by his patron to collect and revise all his writings.

This work filled his remaining years. It is called *Machberoth,* meaning collections. It consists of twenty-eight chapters in verse and rhymed prose. From them we get some pictures of the life of his Jewish contemporaries, their wide scholarship, their material prosperity and also their weaknesses.

Here are some translated extracts:

Two Maids.

Tamar, would I were a flower, tender and sweet,
To be trampled to earth by her pretty feet.

Beriah 'tis from fear of beholding her face
That Messiah delayeth in showing his grace.
Tamar is enchanting, delighting the eyes,
Beriah a nightmare in woman's disguise.

THINE EYES.

Thine eyes are as bright, O thou sweet gazelle,
As the glittering rays of the sun's golden spell,
And thy face glows as fair in the light of the day
As the red blushing sky when the morning is gay.
Ah, shall I praise the bright charm of thine eyes,
That move every heart, that win all by surprise?
For peerless thy charms, and unequalled thy birth;
Thou art of heaven, all others of earth.

Imitator of Dante.

His best chapter is *Paradise and Hell.* This is nothing more than an extravaganza on Dante's "Inferno." He chooses it as a clever means of exposing the frailties of his day.

Here is an extract:

At times in my spirit I fitfully ponder,
Where shall I pass after death from this light,
Do heaven's bright glories await me, I wonder,
Or Lucifer's kingdom of darkness and night?
In the one, though 'tis perhaps of ill reputation,
A crowd of gay damsels will sit by my side;
But in heaven there's boredom and mental starvation.
To hoary old men and to crones I'll be tied.

Some one has said: "Dante wrote a divine, Immanuel a human, comedy."

Immanuel was the last of the great Neo-Hebraic poets of his age. He tells us that Jehuda Siciliano was a greater poet than he. But we only know him through Immanuel's praise. Moses Da Rieti added some poems to the Italian liturgy, and his "Book of the Temple" earned for him also the title of "the Hebrew Dante."

Notes and References.

The quotations from Kalonymos and Immanuel are taken from *Hebrew Humour,* Dr. J. Chotzner, London: Luzac & Co., 1905.

Morais contrasts the purity of the poet Charizi's style with the occasional coarseness of Immanuel. See "Publications of Gratz College," Philadelphia, Pa., 1897.

Immanuel and Dante:

Professor Paur makes this comparison between Dante and Immanuel's visions of the future world:

If we closely examine the sentiments set forth in the little poetic volume (Ha-Topeth-ve-Ha-Eden), we must confess that the Jew Immanuel need not blush in the presence of the Christian Dante. It is true that he, like Dante, condemns those philosophical theories in which the personality of God, the creation of the world by His power, and the existence of a divine spirit in man are denied. But Immanuel shows more courage than Dante by effectively stigmatizing hypocrisy in all its various shapes and forms. He also possesses a greater spirit of tolerance than the latter had shown towards men professing creeds different from his own—a beautiful human naiveté in matters of religion—which must be sought after with the lantern of Diogenes among the Christians of that period.

These words have reference to Immanuel's placing in Paradise in a blaze of glory "the pious of *all* peoples." This reflects the best spirit of Talmudic teaching!

Chess, Dancing:

We learn incidentally from statements in the works of Kalonymos that chess was the popular Jewish game of the period. Also that the rabbis did not permit dancing except between members of the same sex.

Jews and the Popes:

In the survey of Dr. A. Berliner's *History of the Jews in Rome,* Frankfort a-M: J. Kauffmann, 1894, the late Dr. Schechter wrote:

"As it seems, toleration of the Jews was a regular tra-

dition with the Popes. Gregory the Great defends their synagogues against the desires of some Bishops to convert them into churches and protects the Jews, too, against compulsory conversions. Alexander III says that the Jews ought to be tolerated for "reasons of pure humanity"; whilst his successor, Clement III recommends the same treatment by reason of "pure mercy and compassion," and even Innocent III, who compelled Jews to wear the yellow badge, thinks that "the Jews must be considered as the living witnesses of the Christian faith, wherefore they should be tolerated even with their religious practices." Pope Boniface IX (1392) again calls the Jewish doctor Angelus Manuele his beloved son, and appoints him his *familiaris*. Some years later (1405) another Jewish doctor, Magister Elyas Sabbas, is admitted by the magistrate as a Roman citizen. The brief in which Innocent VII approves of this act contains also the diploma of citizenship, which says, among other things: "Though the infidelity of the Jews whom the Maker of the world has created is to be condemned, and the obstinacy of their unbelief is to be stamped out, the maintenance of their existence is nevertheless in a certain manner useful and necessary to Christians, especially (the existence) of such Jews who, well schooled in medical knowledge, have proved beneficial to Christians, helping them to regain their former health." Some Popes even tried their best to protect the Jews against the persecutions of the Inquisitors and to allow refugees from Spain to settle in Rome."

Under Pope Alexander VI (1492) many Jewish refugees from Spain found an asylum in the papal dominions.

Jewish Humor:

The humorous quotations in this chapter are characteristic. A strong sense of humor has been the Jew's salvation in the Dark Ages. It tempered all his misfortunes. Behind it lies his undying optimism.

Theme for Discussion:

Why could the theme of Purgatory not be treated as seriously by a Jewish as by a Christian poet?

CHAPTER XXXII.

ISRAEL'S FURTHER FORTUNES IN ITALY.

In the Italian Republics.

For the next century or so after Kalonymos and Immanuel, the condition of the Italian Jews, comparatively speaking, left little to be desired. It even became one of the lands of refuge for Spanish Israel after the storm broke there. For the separate Italian republics, Venice, Florence, Genoa and Pisa, became such important commercial centres that Church interest and therefore Church dominance had fallen somewhat into the background. The secular and industrial status of society, such as we see around us to-day, as against the clerical and military, was already foreshadowed in mediæval Italy. Trade with other nations and races gave the Italians breadth of view and a kind of humanizing education. In such a state of society, the Jew, as a man of affairs,—which hard training in the school of adversity had made him—was valued in spite of his creed. Venice asked the Jews to open credit banks to aid poor traders. It is significant that the word "bank" comes from Italy. In England we noticed that the Caorsini from Italy were already rivals of the Jews as money lenders (p. 173). Commercial loans on interest gradually ceased to be stigmatized as usury. The words had been treated as identical, as in the Bible. We know of Jechiel of Pisa as the man who controlled the money markets of Tuscany. But we also know him as the generous man who contributed liberally to release the Jewish captives. This sad duty often devolved on mediæval Israel and it was never evaded.

"Shem in the Tents of Japheth."

While in Italy the Jewish physicians were as renowned as those of other lands, no ban forbade their ministering to Gentiles. In fact, Christians held friendly relations with Jews, at times attended their weddings; and "bulls" against social commingling became dead letters—for the time. Even the traveling friars could not turn public opinion against them. Bernardinus, of Feltre, a Franciscan monk, fanatic and powerful, who used all his eloquent zeal to stir the hate of the populace against the Jews, was forbidden to continue his incendiary crusade in Italian cities and finally, in 1487, was banished from Florence.

His very different reception in the Tyrol and the awful consequences, best bring out the contrasts of civilization in these respective lands. So, although in alarm, the Jews of Italy called a Synod in Bologna in 1416 to meet the attacks of Vincent Ferrer (another monk of the same bigoted type) it turned out to be unnecessary.

In the classic era of the Medicis the Jews attended Italian universities and had their share in the Renaissance—that is, in its literary rather than in its artistic phase. They were the first Jews to make use of the printing press. Among Jewish scientists and litterateurs worthy of special mention was Judah ben Yechiel, rabbi of Mantua, better known as Messer Leon, who flourished at the end of the fifteenth century. He wrote on philosophy, logic and rhetoric. As a Bible commentator he was daring and original for his day. He ventured to draw comparison between the Hebrew prophets and the Latin classics, bringing out the literary excellence of the Jewish writings. But the world was not yet ready to study "the Bible as literature." His comments on "the virtu-

ous woman" of Proverbs xxxi, leads him to a panegyric on woman in general. He has a word to say on Petrarch's Laura. Yes, the Italian Jews were Italian. As we have seen in other lands, the Jews always showed political, social and literary identification with countries that became homes.

Elias del Medigo.

A far profounder Italian Jewish scholar was Elias del Medigo, born in the year that Messer Leon died—1491. Educated in the university of Padua, he became an all-round scholar, travelling widely and drinking deeply from all sources of learning. He studied astronomy under Galileo. His mastery of Greek enabled him to make Christian scholars familiar with Aristotle in the original; with Aristotle in the commentary of Averroes, through his mastery of Arabic; and again with Maimonides' interpretation of Aristotle through his mastery of Hebrew. Pico de Mirandola, a versatile Christian scholar, became his pupil and patron. Under Jewish teaching Pico became an adept in Kabala, but he drew from it Christian doctrine—such as the Incarnation and Original Sin. It was not difficult to infer whatever one desired by reasoning from numbers to facts. So the Jews found it a two-edged sword (p. 236). It enabled the Christian to prove the Trinity from the Hebrew Scriptures. No wonder it came to be a favorite study with Christian theologians, and that they burnt the Talmud and spared the Zohar.

But it was not from Medigo that Pico learned Kabala. His thoroughly rationalistic temperament had no patience with mysticism. He rather inclined to the sceptical, but like Abraham Ibn Ezra (note p. 117) he kept his extreme opinions diplomatically in reserve. Chosen

WHERE JEWISH COMMUNITIES EXISTED IN ITALY.

by the university of Padua, at the early age of twenty-three to act as umpire in a disputed point of learning, he became a public lecturer in philosophy. So while in some places on the continent Jews were being driven at the sword's point with the cry of Hep, hep (Hierosolyma est perdita, Jerusalem is lost) behind them, in Padua and Florence, Christians gladly sat at the feet of a Jew.

All his scientific and literary pursuits were apart from his main vocation—that of physician. Yet withal he has left behind him works on nearly every science cultivated in his day, from mechanics to optics—and from geography to chemistry. Mathematical astronomy was his great theme. Though he found time to write critiques on Rashi and Ibn Ezra, yet as natural scientist he was most esteemed in his own day and is in ours. The heavens rather than Heaven formed the subject of his research.

The settlement of some German rabbis in Italy, refugees from persecution, brought with it their narrower aspect of religious life. Actual clashes now occurred between liberal and conservative. Indeed something of the same change occurred in the Jewish atmosphere in Italy that occurred in Spain after the advent of the Asherides (p. 249). If then the literary scepter was passing from Spain to Italy, so too this less advantageous experience was going with it. Thus does history repeat itself in many ways.

Although by the middle of the fifteenth century, friar preaching and popish bulls gradually reduced the Italian Jews to much the same social level as those of Germany, we at least have no record of tragic massacres.

Baderesi, Poet and Philosopher.

We will append here a few words about Yedaya Ba-

derisi, a poet and philosopher. Not that he belonged to Italy. The historians are not sure whether this contemporary of Immanuel was born in Spain or in France and driven from the latter in the expulsion of 1306. Of his life we know very little, but his great work *Bechinath Olom* (an Examination of the World) has been translated from the original Hebrew into many tongues, has passed through at least forty-four editions and has been honored with commentaries upon it by many writers.

The following illustrations show his use of metaphor in conveying ethical lessons:

The World a Sea.

"The world is as a boisterous sea of immense depth and width, and time forms a fragile bridge built over it. The upper end thereof is fastened to the ground by means of weak ropes, and its lower end leads to a place which is shone upon by the rays of the divine light, emanating from God's majesty. The breadth of the bridge is but one short span and has no balustrade work to save one from falling over it. Over this narrow path, thou, O son of man, art compelled to go, and notwithstanding all thy might and glory, thou canst not turn either to the right or to the left. Now, threatened as thou art on both sides with death and destruction, how canst thou maintian thy courage, and how can thy hands remain firm?

"In vain dost thou pride thyself on the possession of vast treasures obtained by thee through violence and wickedness; for of what avail are they to thee when the sea rises and foams, thus threatening to wreck the little hut (i. e., the body), wherein thou liest? Canst thou boast thou canst calm and subdue the powerful waves, or wilt thou try to fight against them? Drunk with the wine of thy vanity thou art pushed hither and thither, until thou sinkest into the mighty abyss; and tossed about from deep to deep, thou wilt at last be merged

in the foaming waves, and none will bring thee to life again."

MAN.

"Can earth's uttermost bounds circumscribe that faculty whose seat is a chamber small as the palm of a man's hand? Such is man's portion from God, the divine portion from the spiritual world. God is in Heaven, and this the only being on earth that goeth to approach Him. He explores the registers in the scriptures of truth, and great are his acts in law and justice. Were it not that the accidents of life confuse him, and the spirit of his times confound him, nothing would withhold man from soaring to the skies to embrace the universe, until he resembled the angels in the true knowledge of excellence.

Is it meet that a beautiful piece of sapphire, like this [man] should be exposed to accidents and plagues, as a target to the arrow?

Although exposed to subversion by worldly accidents, shall man, like the animals of the field and beasts of the forest, die, and be no more?

Will this precious and sacred stone be assimilated with clods of earth, and cast into shades of oblivion?"

THE SOUL.

"But nature, through the wisdom of its Creator, has prepared within us a source of eternal life, and left to us the blessed consolation of a residuary immortal soul.

The Heavens for height, the Earth for depth; but the extent of a comprehensive heart is unfathomable.

For thine association with time passeth away more rapidly than the evening twilight; and thou art like the child who endeavors to collect a handful of the sun's rays, but who stands astonished, on opening his hand, to find nothing within it.

Behold now a sore evil, almost irremediable; lo, an intelligent being, evincing desires for purposes of no avail!

Is such the act of a wise man? Ought so paltry a dish of lentils to be deemed an equivalent for the noble spiritual birthright?

What profit has he who, during the vision of a night,

imagines himself a king, when, at the very summit of his power and pride, he awakes, and finds it but a dream!

If my whole travel and journey be yet short of the desired port, what avails the length of time employed in the passage?

Where is the good or wisdom of dwelling in this frail mortal habitation, be it for a long or short time, if in beholding the good and the evil I neither comprheend nor exert my knowledge how to make choice of the good?

Shall I become powerful because my imagination has anointed me a king?"

Baderesi has written many other shorter poems, essays, a commentary on the "Ethics of the Fathers," a medical treatise and some miscellaneous writings. A broad scholar, he naturally opposed the attempt to limit scientific study. He says:

"We cannot give up science, it is the breath of our nostrils. . . . Maimonides' example is our precedent."

Notes and References.

Baderesi:

The quotations from "Examination of the World" are from the translations of the *Hebrew Review* and Dr. Chotzner.

Averroes:

This great Arabian translator and commentator of Aristotle was chiefly studied by Jewish philosophers, and the preservation of his writings is entirely due to them. See article vol. ii, *Jewish Encyclopedia.*

Israel Abrahams in his *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages,* has two chapters on the occasional congenial relations between Jews and Christians.

Jewish Physicians and Their Contributions to the Science of Medicine, Friedenwald, Gratz College Publications, 1897.

Theme for Discussion:

Why was medicine a favorite study of the Jew?

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE MARANOS.

Forced Converts in Spain.

The golden age in Spain was now over; the iron age had set in. Perhaps the year 1391 may be regarded as the dividing line, the year when Christianity was forced upon so many of the Jews at the sword's point. That the Cross was not forced upon all the Jews of Spain is not to be put to the credit of their persecutors. A wild mob is hardly systematic. Doubtless as many homes were overlooked as were attacked. Before all communities were reached the storm may have spent itself. Yet for the thousands who had submitted to baptism under duress no return was permitted. This unnatural condition completely upset the Jewish status and partly affected their morale. Omitting those, perhaps the majority whom the fanatics did not reach, and who remained in statu quo, the rest, who had been forced into this unnatural status, fall into groups something like the following:

First, those loyal at all costs, who quietly but unflinchingly were staunch to the faith, undaunted by the suffering or the death it might entail. These were the martyrs. Some of these saved their religious integrity by escaping into Moorish lands—Granada, Morocco, Tunis.

Second, at the other extreme were the worldly and unbelieving. These met the proselytizing crusade halfway, content to throw off the hampering restrictions of the old religion in which as materialists they almost as

little believed as in the new religion they now adopted, only because it gave unrestrained opportunity to ambition.

If these be compared with the extreme Hellenists of Maccabean days, sixteen hundred years before, then the staunch party deserve comparison with the *chassidim* of that same Greek-Syrian era. (*T. Y.*, p. 32.)

Third, the bulk of those baptized by force stood between these extremes. They outwardly bowed to the formalities of the Church under priestly pressure. They were called by the Spanish *Maranos,* meaning "accursed." By their own brethren they were more justly styled *Anusim* (Hebrew "constrained"). But the former term has clung to them.

They were forced by this artificial status to live a double life. Outwardly they were Neo-Christians mumbling the Catholic ritual, bowing to the Cross, and baptizing their children in the name of the Trinity. But by conviction they were Jews, sharing its beliefs and hopes; in the secrecy of their homes keeping the Passover and the dietary laws, circumcising their sons and contributing towards the maintenance of the Synagogue by covert relations with the avowed Jews.

Their situation became daily more difficult. For while for the most part they intermarried among themselves and were thus able to transmit the Jewish tradition, alliances with them were sought by some impoverished Spanish grandees. Many again were high in the professions, their children in some instances even drawn into ecclesiastical life—for in those times of the all-pervading dominance of the Church, it was the surest path to distinction and a most naturally chosen career, and was regarded in a secular spirit even by Christians.

As in earlier instances where persecution forced Jews

GHETTO IN SIENNA.

to wear a mask, they regarded it as a temporary ordeal.

Some of the monarchs tolerated or connived at the situation. But the masses hated the Maranos even more than they hated the avowed Jews because of the prominent posts many held.

Defenders of Judaism.

Almost the only literary activity in these difficult times consisted of polemic articles written in reply to attacks on Judaism by prelates or apostates. Among such defenders of the faith were Chasdai Crescas (p. 268), who exposed the logical weakness of such Church doctrines as the Trinity, the Fall of Man, the Supernatural Conception and Transubstantiation. Profiat Duran, a Marano who openly returned to the Jewish fold, penned a satire against the Church, which the clergy considered strong enough to burn. This was not his only work. He has left us some religious commentaries, some scientific essays, a Hebrew Grammar and a history of the persecutions of his day.

Another definer and defender of Jewish theology was Joseph Ibn Shem Tob. These writers on theology were supplemented by pulpit teachings of the Jewish preachers of the day on the fundamentals of Judaism and its distinction from Christianity. This was not done for the purpose of bringing converts to the Jewish fold—that was perilous at best—but was only an earnest desire to preserve their own.

Anti-Jewish Laws Enforced.

So far the government of Castile had left the status of the Jews officially unchanged. For King Henry III had not openly countenanced the persecutions of 1391—those being individual and unauthorized. But such

treatment almost condoned, reflected public opinion and led to the reshaping of government relations toward the Jews. So in the year 1408, in the regency of Juan II, the anti-Jewish code of Alphonso the Wise, drawn up in 1260 and so far allowed to remain a dead letter, was now for the first time put into practice. This removed the last favorable distinction between the Jews of Spain and those of German states. As most of the influential Jews were now Maranos, it was easier to put these laws into operation. Already in 1406 an expulsion from Castile was only staved off by a payment of 50,000 crowns. The quarrels of the four Christian kingdoms, Castile, Aragon, Navarre and Portugal, made the presence of wealth producing Jews still a necessity.

But darker days dawned for them in the appearance on the scene of the gloomy Dominican friar, San Vincent Ferrer. Surrounded by a band of Flagellants he preached against the degradations of the times. It was not to be denied that society was serried with corruption. The Church had become sadly demoralized. Dissolute men intrigued against each other for the papal chair. Unfortunately the *heretic* stirred the ire of Ferrer more than the *sinner*. He was particularly bitter against Maranos. Permitted by the sovereign to preach in the synagogue, crucifix in hand, the Jews feared that another forced conversion was impending.

As though that were not enough, the institution of the statutes of Alphonso was followed by a severer edict in 1412. This later anti-Jewish document was ingeniously devised to make their lives as Jews unsupportable. To summarize it:

First, it robbed the Jews of power by abolishing their judicial autonomy; barred them from public office; and forbade their carrying of weapons. Next it attacked

their dignity and self-respect by imposing distinctive dress, the badge and the full beard; and, taking from them the title of "Don." Then it deprived them of freedom, by shutting them up in Juderias and forbidding travel or emigration. Lastly it robbed them of the bare means of subsistence by cutting them off from their relations with Christians and forbidding the practise of every handicraft.

Their salvation against this venomous document lay in its severity. It was impossible of fulfilment. Some of these restrictions were modified immediately on Ferrer's withdrawal. But he left Castile only to harass the Jews in Aragon. It is said that in both kingdoms under his terrible regime, some twenty thousand were forced into the Church, thus further swelling the ranks of the Maranos, though we learn elsewhere that his converts returned to Judaism. Portugal alone dared refuse him admission, the last Jewish refuge in the Peninsula.

Another "Disputation."

Not even yet were they to be left alone. Benedict XIII, one of two rival popes, aided by an apostate, Joshua Lorqui, planned the conversion of all the Jews of Spain as a political device to strengthen his hold on the papal chair. (The Pope might have profited by reading Hadrian's hopeless project to repress Judaism in the year 135 (*T. Y.*, p. 213.) For this purpose he arranged a Disputation between the Christian clergy and some Jewish rabbis at Tortosa (Aragon) 1412. Among the rabbis summoned to answer the Church's charges were Vidal Benveniste, who was able to make his plea in Latin; Astruc Levi, and the famous pupil of Crescas, Joseph Albo. As in a similar Disputation in Aragon, two hundred years earlier, when Nachmanides was the Jew-

ish champion, an apostate was the chief opponent. Then it was Pablo Christiani, now it is Joshua Lorqui, but known among the Jews as *Megadef,* the Calumniator, for he furbished up every anti-Jewish slander. The Disputation lasted twenty-one months and from every possible biblical text either by mistranslation or allegorical interpretation, proofs of Christian doctrine were extorted. But the discussion was focused on the question whether the Talmud recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Like his predecessor, Nachmanides, Astruc Levi maintained that the Agada of the Talmud as distinct from the Halacha was in no sense authoritative, it was homiletic only (p. 218).

Like all previous Disputations, it failed. Such controversies missing as they must the impalpable spirit of religion aided no creed while they only degraded religion itself. A further series of repressive laws, which the pope in chagrin was about to impose upon the Jews were prevented by his own deposition. At this moment, too, the bigoted Queen-regent Carolina died. So there was breathing space for a while. The friendly King Juan II even permitted the calling of a Jewish council at Avila to reorganize the demoralized communities and to re-establish Jewish schools and colleges. But it was not to be for long.

Note and Reference.

Just as the Jews were confined to Juderias, the Moors, residing in Christian Spain were confined to Morerias.

Read Heine's satire on a mediæval Disputation.

Theme for Discussion:

Contrast between modern Maranos, those who keep their Jewish faith in the background to escape prejudice and the call of Isaiah xliii:10; xli:6.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ALBO AND HIS "IKKARIM."

Something has already been said of Joseph Albo in the last chapter in connection with his participance in the Tortosa disputation. But his philosophy deserves a separate chapter; for, next to his master Crescas, he was the most important literary personage of the first half of the fifteenth century; and of the two he is far more widely read.

Born about 1380 in Aragon, he was a popularizer of the philosophy of others rather than an original investigator. Such men must not be underrated; then, too, his was the last word on Jewish philosophy in Spain. He was a famous preacher, and had a fascinating style.

Judaism's Fundamentals.

His chief work is called *Ikkarim,* meaning Roots or Fundamentals. He condensed Jewish belief into three indispensable dogmas—God, Revelation and Retribution. The principles of all great religions may be expressed under these three heads. But he further elaborates from them additional subordinate principles or "branches," carrying out his metaphor:

1st, *God*—Divine Unity; Incorporeality; Eternity; Perfection; *Creatio ex nihilo.*

2d, *Revelation*—Supremacy of the Prophet Moses; Binding force of Mosaic Law (until another shall be proclaimed as publicly and before as many witnesses).

3d, *Retribution*—Resurrection; Advent of the Messiah.

Of the Messiah's coming, he remarks: "It is no essen-

tial principle of the divine law, which may be accepted without this article of faith." Perhaps the bitter controversies around this belief in public disputations may have suggested this attitude. If so, then Albo's creed as well as Maimonides' reflects its times.

Albo further showed the influence of Christian environment in making the salvation of the soul the aim of life. This carried with it the necessity of making *faith* religion's first requisite. But the Synagogue as distinct from the Church makes obedience to law religion's prime obligation. (On this point see *T. Y.*, p. 20.) More in harmony with the genius of Judaism is this admirable teaching of Albo: "Perfection may be attained by the fulfilment of a single religious precept with whole-hearted sincerity."

The Ikkarim became an important contribution to Jewish theology. Its production was doubtless prompted by the attacks of the Church and to that extent it belongs to the polemic literature of the day. But it was a work that continued to shape Jewish thought for ages to come.

It is couched in a popular style and in a fair-minded spirit of logical deduction, and it is reinforced by abundant quotation from Scripture. It is relieved by frequent illustrations that reveal the variety and at the same time the limits of his general knowledge. Here are a few striking passages:

Religious Fear.

Fear ceases to be meritorious if not accompanied by inward joy and gladness. [The word "fear" has two distinct meanings.]

Religious Love.

Love of the abstract good is the most pure and sublime that the human heart can entertain, as it is not influ-

enced by enjoyment to be derived, but only by the knowledge that it is good. (Compare this sentiment and also that on "Repentance," with Bachya, p. 87.)

Perfect love requires that the lover should renounce his own individual advantage and welfare, in order to promote the prosperity of the object beloved; thus we find Jonathan.

Freewill.

That alone is the truly free act and deed of man, which is not done in a hurry, but is the result of mature reflection, and of the consciousness that the alternative is in his power, that no external influence impels or impedes his choice or controls his determination.

Some actions are predestined, others voluntary, and some influenced by both principles.

He says further, if will were not free man could not be responsible.

Divine Omniscience.

It is impossible that anything whatever should occur, throughout the universe, without its being perfectly known to the Deity in its minutest details, bearings and consequences; as the contrary would infer a want of knowledge or ignorance in the Deity, a defect entirely at variance with the Divine Essence, which is free from all imperfection.

God's grace can grant and reconcile gifts which are contrary in their nature.

Job.

The whole book of Job is written for the purpose of solving the two difficult questions: Why do the wicked prosper? Why do the righteous suffer?

Providence.

The existence of the habitable earth is a proof that the world was created according to the will and design of Providence.

Sometimes the superintendence of Providence is made manifest in the afflictions which befall an individual.

We cannot cast any imputation on Divine Providence for not excluding the wicked from the benefits of that general decree of prosperity which has been pronounced in favor of the body politic of which he is a member.

The dispensations of Providence, whether for good or for evil, are regulated by the capacity of the recipient from his being in a certain frame of mind, prepared and adapted for that dispensation. (Compare this view and that on Omniscience with those of Gersonides, p. 248.)

Divine Justice.

It is possible that we may be mistaken in our estimate, and that while we consider a man to be wicked the Searcher of all hearts knows that he is virtuous. And that we may likewise be mistaken in our ideas of happiness, which attend wealth and power.

Knowledge versus Experience.

It is inherent in human nature that the evidence of our sense should produce a stronger effect on us than what results from previous knowledge; for example, Moses' *seeing* the golden calf, of which he had been previously informed.

Blessing.

The person blessing put his hand on the head of him whom he blessed; so that love became, as it were, a conductor to draw down the Divine favor, and lead it on to him whom he blessed.

Forgiveness.

Sin is no more completely beyond the reach of pardon than man's power of sinning exceeds the divine power of forgiveness.

Prayer.

In order that a prayer shall in any wise be worthy of Him to whom it is addressed, or be at all acceptable to Him, three things are indispensably necessary. The first is that the language be concise, clear, emphatic and sup-

plicatory. The second is that it must be expressive of the real sentiments of him who prays. And, lastly, that the prayer be pronounced with humility and devotion.

Sometimes the granting of his prayers is in mercy withheld from man, inasmuch as what he prays for would, if granted, be productive of evil to him. Therefore, the choicest prayer is that offered by the sage when he said: "Lord of the universe, let Thy will be done on high, grant content and a tranquil mind to those who fear Thee below on earth, and do that which seemeth good to Thee."

Repentance.

If our penitence springs from a feeling of love to God, independent of any selfish admixture of hope or fear, or expected reward, or dreaded punishment, God's mercy and love shall be as freely exercised towards us as our penitence was freely and purely excited towards Him.

Like all the philosophers of his day, he treats the spheres as conscious beings, but wholly controlled by divinity. He has a very convincing argument against astrology—by instancing the founding of a ship with all on board though born under different stars and with different fates.

Faith.

Faith is the perfect impression on the soul of a something past or to come, and which no other impression has the power to gainsay or contradict.

Prophecy.

Prophecy is the conjunction of the Divine Spirit with human reason.

God and Man.

Although on account of the *Dispenser* of revelation there is an absolute necessity that what emanates from God must be uniform and the same to the whole human

species, yet, on account of the *receivers* there is no absolute necessity, but that there may be a variation.

Divine Attributes.

The Deity is not only independent of space, but is the space of the universe. Accordingly our Rabbis of blessed memory use the word *mokom,* "place," to designate the Deity.

When he is called *kadmon,* "The primary or eldest of all beings," this term is only used because language does not offer a more appropriate word.

All inquirers and philosophers are unanimous in the opinion, that we cannot assign to the Deity any qualities either essential or accidental, except by means of the effects produced by Him.

When it is said, "The Lord liveth"—if in reference to His works, the meaning is, all life emanates from Him, therefore He must be alive; as without Him there could be no life.

It is singular that that word אמת "truth" is composed of the first, the last, and the central letter of the Hebrew alphabet; and therefore symbolic of that Being who is past, present, and to come, and whose seal it is emphatically said to be.

NOTE AND REFERENCE.

The *Hebrew Review,* London, 1835, Simpkin & Marshall, contains a translation of the Ikkarim, from which the foregoing quotations have been selected.

Theme for Discussion:

Compare Albo's principles of the Jewish Creed with those of Maimonides, pp. 185, 186.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE HUSSITE MOVEMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON JEWRY.

Reference has already been made to the corruptions that were slowly eating their way into the foundations of the Catholic Church. These were beginning to be noticed with disquietude by its own earnest sons, and the boldest of them began sounding an alarm. The times were ripening for a new order of things. But they were ripening imperceptibly. "The wheels of God grind slowly."

So, long before the Church revolution, or, as it is better known, the "Reformation," took place, warning preachers appeared. (This subject is fully treated in the concluding volume, *Modern Jewish History.*) They were but voices crying in the wilderness—martyrs for a cause for which they prepared the way but whose fulfilment they were not destined to see.

Among the more famous and earliest of these was John Wycliffe, a man high in the English university and the Church. He dared to condemn the conduct of some churchmen and some doctrines of the Church. His disciples became a sect known as Lollards, and many were burnt as heretics. So the first seeds were sown in the fourteenth century and were scattered far.

John Huss.

They were blown across the continent and reached Bohemia. In Prague, John Huss, of peasant origin, but with a distinguished university career, was fired by the works of Wycliffe, which reached his hands. Rector of

a people's chapel, he, too, entered the lists against Church corruption. His first work was an exposé of forged miracles and ecclesiastical greed.

A breach was formed that gradually widened between him and his clerical colleagues, and he was forbidden to perform priestly functions. But the religious issue in Prague was complicated with a racial issue. Life's problems rarely come unmixed . The native population was Czech, but there was a large German settlement and great antagonism existed between the two nationalities. (It exists to this day.) The public-spirited Huss placed himself at the head of the Czech party. So he was the people's hero in every way, while for the same reason he earned the dual animosity of clerics and Germans.

It is beyond the province of this volume to tell the story of his gradual breach with the Church. Suffice to record here that he was condemned by the Council of Constance and burnt there in 1413.

His death brought a protest from the Prague diet and roused the indignation of all Bohemia. The further burning of Jerome of Prague by the Council of Constance crystalized the opponents into a Hussite party with John Zizka, a soldier, at its head. They compared themselves to the Israelites and the Catholics to the heathen Philistines. The historian Graetz says: "Whenever a party in Christendom opposes itself to the ruling church it assumes a tinge of the Old Testamnet, not to say Jewish spirit." Lecky, in his *Rationalism in Europe,* further declares: "The early Protestant defenders of civil liberty derived their political principles from the Old Testament, and the defenders of despotism from the New."

A war was the outcome, which continued fitfully from 1420 to 1434. Although the Emperor could summon a

vast army to his banner and mercenaries came from many lands, still the Hussites made up in zeal for what they lacked in numbers. In this respect they resembled the Maccabees of old as against the Greek Syrians. But the Catholic party was still too strong,—for the day was not yet at hand for all Europe to be roused, That came later. For the time being, the Hussites were defeated, in 1434. As a political party it disappeared, but some slight concessions were won. The cause was leavening.

The Hussites and the Jews.

Now to consider the relation the Jews had to this conflict in the Church—for all great questions touched them in some way. The Pope who held the chair during the entire struggle was Martin V—not at all a bad man as popes went. On his appointment a Jewish deputation met him with congratulations and gifts, including a scroll of the Law. He received them with the words: "You have the Law, but understand it not—the old has been superseded by the new." But his deed was kinder than his word. In response to distinct Jewish appeals against continued outrageous treatment, he issued a bull in which he reminded Christendom that Jews were made in the image of God (some had forgotten they were even human)—that they were to be undisturbed in the observance of the customs of the Synagogue and were not to be coerced to conform to those of the Church; that their business relations with Christians were to be unrestricted. The Emperor Sigismund, equally considerate, sent a message throughout Germany, in 1418, to confirm these privileges.

But when war broke out between Catholic and Hussite all this good was undone, for the Catholics rather

PROCESSION OF JEWS TO POPE MARTIN V.

illogically vented part of their fanaticism on the Jews; they were even accused of secretly aiding the Hussites. Like the Crusaders, the armies turned upon the Jews as their nearer enemies—so war was varied by massacre. Once more we have the sickening instances of Jewish parents mercifully slaying their children to save them from a worse fate at the hands of barbarians.

The Jewish community proclaimed a fast for several days, in 1421, and prayer for the success of the Hussites.

Martin V issued another bull, in 1422, in defence of the Jews, but it was of no avail against the passions aroused by war. The Benedictine monks preached against the Jews; the clergy made laws against them; Cologne expelled them, and some South German towns burnt them.

Persecutions in Austria.

Austria, once tolerant, now became the storm centre under the Archduke Albert, who for two sad years was emperor. 'Twas he who, in 1439, endorsed their expulsion from Augsburg. All the slanderous accusations, now worn threadbare, were furnished against long-suffering Israel. The rich were plundered, the poor banished, and the alternative of the Cross or the sword offered them once more.

Children were taken from their parents and placed in cloisters—others were burnt, while some forced converts escaped to live an open Jewish life elsewhere.

The story is told of one youth, who renounced his faith and became a favorite of Duke Frederick. Later he was overtaken by remorse. He firmly declared his intention of returning to Judaism and joyfully went to the stake a martyr to the religion of his ancestors.

Finally, a Church Council at Basle that sat from 1431 to 1443, inflamed by the Hussite heresy, made the Jews feel its fanaticism—by renewing all the old restrictions against them with regard to holding public offices, hiring Christian servants, wearing a badge and living in a separate quarter. In addition thereto, Jews were to be compelled to listen to conversion sermons and to be debarred from university degrees. Pope Eugenius IV intensified these restrictions, practically treating Jews and Mohammedans as outlaws.

In this same Hussite cycle of events is yet another story of ritual murder brought against the Jews of Palma in Majorca. That the person they were charged with slaying was discovered alive and unhurt made little difference. The occasion was used as a pretext to force the whole Jewish community into the Church after having existed there for a thousand years.

Let us complete the record of the Jews of Austria of this period.

The half century reign of Emperor Frederick III, from 1440-1498, covering the regime of six popes, made life for Jews in German provinces, which included Austria, one of unbroken bitterness and peril; not because he was wicked, but only because he was weak. Outside of their cities of residence, they were practically outlaws, passive Ishmaelites in that, though unoffending, all men's hands were against them.

Simon of Trent.

We will single out from many, the saddest tragedy of his reign. In 1475, the accidental drowning of a boy, Simon of Trent, in the Austrian Tyrol, was easily worked up into the regular "blood accusation," with the monotony

of whose procedure the reader must be wearied. It meant a virulent attack on the Jews and the burning of many.

Pilgrims came to view the body and declared they saw a halo hovering around it. A church was reared at the boy's grave, which continued to be a place of pilgrimage. In spite of the official denial of Pope Sixtus IV and his refusal to permit Simon's canonization, this "ritual murder" is recorded in the Catholic book of the "Acts of the Saints," still in use—like the similar and earlier fiction of Hugh of Lincoln (see p. 167). Long is the life of a lie.

The incident fanned anew the flames of fanaticism wherever the legend was told. Ratisbon would have slain its whole Jewish community were it not for the vigorous intervention of the Emperor. The Jews of Suabia were expelled and outrages were continued to be imposed on those of other communities for generations afterwards for this mythical crime.

Thus the fifteenth century, like the fourteenth, closes in tears and blood.

Notes and References.

Simon of Trent:

As late as the year 1899, in reply to a similar accusation in Bonn, Dr. Güdemann, of Vienna, declared that "every blood accusation is a shameless falsification of the truth." A suit was brought against him for libeling the Catholic Church, since it still officially recognized the murder of Simon of Trent!

"Blood Accusation":

Read *Das Blut in Glauben und Aberglauben der Menschheit,* by Hermann L. Strack, professor of theology in the University of Berlin.

In reviewing this book, Professor Schechter writes:

"The subject must be more painful to the Christian scholar, who naturally considers it as does Professor Strack, a profanation of the name of Christ, and a terrible libel upon his Church. . . .

"The book opens with a precise, but full account of all the beliefs and superstitions connected with blood among the various nations of the world, both civilized and savage. . . . He shows how strange legends connected with the host even led to the erroneous belief that early Christianity practiced human sacrifices. . . . Chapter xix is devoted to the protests against this slander of the Jews by popes, cardinals, bishops, emperors, kings and princes, by theological faculties and individual scholars."

Dr. Strack was determined not to hold his peace as long as he could "wield the sword of the spirit."

Thus scholarship was brought to the service of justice and humanity. He has nailed a hoary slander that has done incalculable mischief to Israel.

An English translation is issued by the Bloch Publishing Co.

Theme for Discussion:

Why did the Hussite uprising foment antagonism against the Jews?

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE RISE OF POLAND AND FALL OF ROME

We must break the continuity of our narrative for a brief space to trace the earlier history of Israel in another land—Poland. The Poles, a Slavic tribe, entered a little late into the European family of nations—though there were later yet to come. Its national history hardly begins before the ninth century and it did not become Christian until about the year 1000. From that time on its fortunes had an alternate ebb and flow till the close of the fifteenth century, and then it was all ebb until its course was rudely brought to a close in the eighteenth century.

Jews Form Poland's Middle Class.

The Jews from Southern Russia, probably including the remains of the Chazars (chap. v.), found a congenial home in Poland as early as the tenth century. They came in larger numbers after the persecutions of the First Crusade (1098).

Driven from other lands, they were hailed here. For the Polish population consisted of but two classes—the nobles, who owned the soil, and the serfs, who tilled it and who were engaged in simple industries. They needed a middle class, a commercial class, who would bring to this new country that enterprise needed to develop its natural resources. The Jews were found to be such a people. They had rendered a similar service to Hungary. It was they who now directed the working of the salt mines and who farmed the taxes and customs—though not admitted to the handicrafts.

It is a hard saying that the Polish population, just because they were less civilized and Christianity less organized, were more tolerant than in those older countries where the Church held completer sway. Such had been the experience of Jews in Spain in the fifth century. So, although, in 1264 and 1279, Church Assemblies met in Bruda and enacted a series of Jewish restrictions, whose details are familiar to the reader by their monotonous reiteration, they received no local sanction and remained inoperative for many years.

Naturally, the Jews were directly concerned in the checkered career of Poland. They suffered under the Tartar incursion of 1241, and could not have been unaffected by the loss of Silesia and later of Pomerania through rival contests for the throne, and by other losses through outside invasion.

It was in the year 1264 that a charter was drawn up distinctly deciding the status of Jews in Poland. This made them an *imperium in imperio,* a group granted a sort of local self-government and a limited local independence. While this was disadvantageous in that it prevented more neighborly relations in time of peace, it protected their interests in time of storm.

In 1319 their legal status was equal with that of the Christian.

Casimir's Charter.

But, under Casimir III the Great, who reigned from 1310 till 1370, deservedly styled "King of the serfs and Jews," and whose amiable aim it was to restrict the nobility and uplift the masses,—a still more favorable charter was granted. This gave freedom of residence, equal taxation, permission to hold landed property, and

special legal rights. Murder of a Jew was to be punished by death—this was new for many lands. Casimir certainly stood alone in addressing the Jews as "our dear and faithful subjects." No king ever tried so hard to lessen their grievances. Consequently, they prospered under such favorable conditions.

When the anti-Jewish crusade swept over Europe as a sequel to the Black Plague, the cruel slander and its consequent massacre tainted Poland, too, for Casimir was dead. But the numbers slain (ten thousand), though large absolutely, were relatively small.

The turn of the tide came with the next king and the next dynasty—the Jagellon. Commercial jealousy plus religious fanaticism brought the change. The rising power of the clergy was demonstrated in the dissemination in Posen of the threadbare fable of a host, desecrated by Jews, miraculously shedding blood. This meant forced "confession" on the rack. We are almost prepared for the next step. A priest leads an anti-Jewish riot at Cracow, in 1407. Then came the Hussite uprising, when feeling ran high; the restrictive laws of the Bruda Assemblies of nigh two hundred years earlier were now put into practice for the first time.

Both Poland and the Jews fared better under Casimir IV, who reigned till the fatal year 1492. Lithuania was now finally united with the land, many lost lands were regained and manufacture and commerce grew by rapid strides, reaching their zenith in the next century under the Sigismunds.

On behalf of the Jews, the broad-minded monarch, Casimir IV, renewed the charter of Casimir III that had fallen into abeyance. He even declared that whoever brought against a Jew the charge of desecrating the

host—or of using Christian blood for Passover without being able to substantiate it, *would be put to death.*

But the Church of Poland had by this time reached the power it had long held further west—and, consistent with its policy, determined to tolerate no such favorable attitude towards the Jews, and proceeded deliberately to introduce the more western state of things. This brings Polish Jewry to the social level of those of Germany and Austria and our narrative to the period in which we last considered their fortunes there.

John of Capistrano, Inquisitor of the Jews.

A new persecutor had appeared—John of Capistrano. Each generation now produced a new Pharaoh—we might style it "an apostolic succession" of enemies of Israel.

Emperors and popes endorsed the crusade of this powerful monk. His dire influence changed former defenders into opponents. A series of oppressions marked his trail:—

The Bavarian Duke of Landshut followed the precedent of Emperor Albert II in fleecing and banishing the Jews, in the year 1450. We see the effect of his preaching in the severity of Pope Nicholas V, for he carried the crusade of restriction even into Italy and succeeded in removing every vestige of favorable distinction that still survived in Spain.

Ferrer had been hard enough. But "the little finger" of the Franciscan monk, John of Capistrano, was "thicker than the loins" of the Dominican friar, Vincent Ferrer (p. 305).

This fearful fanatic was appointed "Inquisitor of the Jews." It was his business, as it was certainly his pleas-

ure, to see that every measure of popish bulls should be relentlessly fulfilled, whether it was against Jews building a synagogue or against a Christian kindling a fire on Sabbath in a Jewish home. He saw to it that no Christian midwife should minister to a Jewish mother, even if it meant the saving of a life. From the unbaptized outcast the milk of human kindness must be withheld.

So the toils were closing around them, for he carried his blighting influence from land to land. Like his predecessor, Ferrer, Capistrano was a man of great force of character, an ascetic whose iron will and persuasive eloquence were all-compelling with the superstitious masses who credulously believed his claim to work miracles. Whithersoever he came he heaped fuel on the fanaticism of monarchs and people and transformed liberals into bigots. Under his regime we find in many German provinces, reaching to Silesia, children of exiled parents handed over to the Church to be brought up in an alien faith and to be forever estranged from their families.

It was he who changed the broad and beneficent edicts of Duke Godfrey of Franconia in favor of the Jews into an edict of banishment against them, in 1454. It was his presence in Breslau that induced the people to imprison the Jews, to confiscate their property and to cancel their outstanding accounts. Here, as elsewhere, a fiction of a desecrated miracle-working host was readily fabricated to give a semblance of justice to the outrage. It was he who pitilessly superintended the torture of some Jews until he wrung from them a confession of guilt for an offence that had never been committed. Then burning, baptism and banishment followed in due course.

This was the man whom the clergy brought to Poland

to frustrate the liberal charter of Casimir IV. He reached Cracow in 1454 and began his denunciatory preaching. At this psychological moment, Casimir was weakened by a defeat at the hands of the Prussians. This was the monkish opportunity. With clergy against him, it was impossible to raise another army to hold his realm together. The bishops dictated terms. They promised aid in his military proceedings if he revoked all privileges granted to the Jews. What should he do? They sought to convince him, too, that the procedure that would further his ambition was also the course of piety. He yielded. The humiliating badge on the Jewish gaberdine, marked the complete degradation of the Jews of Poland.

The Byzantine Empire.

It seemed as though all the hostile forces of Christendom were closing around them and that the knell was to be rung on European Jewry. But dawn came after long night and from an unexpected quarter.

In the year 711 the entrance of the Mohammedan into Spain saved the Jews of that land from gradual but sure extinction. After a lapse of over 700 years a similar invasion was to save them again.

The Byzantine Empire, with its capital at Constantinople, fell before the triumphant hosts of the Turkish monarch, Mahomet II, in the year 1453. That year marks one of the turning points in the Dark Ages.

To give a brief survey of its history: This Greek empire was founded in 395, when Theodosius divided his empire between his two sons. From that year there was a Western (Roman) Empire with its capital at Rome

and an Eastern Empire with its capital at Constantinople. They became also two divisions of the Church—Western Rome of the Latin (Catholic), Eastern Constantinople of the Greek. While never as powerful, the Eastern represented a vast territory overlapping three continents, with splendid opportunities of development. But it never used them wisely or beneficently. Constitutionally despotic, century after century witnessed a series of tyrannical abuses. Through misgovernment from within and enemies from without, it began to melt away piecemeal (p. 23). When the Mohammedan swept triumphantly westward, some of the choicest of their eastern provinces were taken—Palestine, Syria and Egypt. The Bulgarians robbed them on the north, and the Venetians on the south.

Conquered by the Turks.

But the greatest enemy came later—the Turk. This was a subdivision of the Turanian group in the family of races, whose empire spread from Mongolia, moving steadily westward, reaching Russian and Byzantine borders as early as the fifth century. But we are here concerned only with that division of the Turks known as Ottomans or Asmalis, whom we first meet in Western Asia and who finally settled in Phrygia. Here in 1290, Othman founded an independent Turkish Empire and gained a foothold in Europe. The unwary Greeks were foolish enough to despise their small successes, as the Moslems in Spain had equally despised the steady advance of Christians from the north. But soon the Turks had reached Adrianople. A vast army, gathered from Slavonia, Hungary and Italy, met with a crushing defeat in 1390. Then Bajazet I ravaged Servia, Wallachia and

Moldavia. The capture of the Sultan by Timart gave a half century respite. Next Macedonia and Greece—which had all been included in the Byzantine Empire—fell in 1450. It was but three years later that Mahomet II took Constantinople, the last relic of the Empire of the Cæsars. Its walls were overthrown by cannon, marking a new era in warfare. Turkey continued to expand, both in Asia and Europe, and continued for centuries one of the greatest of European powers. The conquest of Constantinople was undertaken with all the barbarity of the age. It was a terrible retribution on an unworthy power, and its overthrow was the extinction of the unfit.

Had there been truer union in Christendom, the Eastern Empire could have been saved. But the intrigues of popes and emperors and their selfish indifference to the larger interests of the Church and State wrought havoc to both.

The stay of the Jews in this empire had not been a happy one. Under its sway, the Patriarchate of Palestine had been abolished and they were banished from the Holy Land. Justinian's code of "One law, one land, one Church," made repression if not oppression of the Jews legal and systematic.

Yet it chronicled no such severe massacres as disgraced the West; although Jews were denied public office. The famous traveler, Benjamin of Tudela (pp. 108-9) testifies to Israel's peace and prosperity there. They were masters of silk culture and produced the best silks and purple stuffs in the Empire.

Turkey Becomes a Haven for the Jews.

It was for the Jews of the rest of Europe that the

Turkish conquest was of such saving and tremendous consequence. We have seen them banished from England and France; we shall see them banished from Spain and Portugal. Not only was the treatment of Ferrer and Capistrano making life for them, as loyal Jews, well nigh impossible, in the Occident, but with a refinement of cruelty, Venetian shipmasters were forbidden to take Jews on their boats, whereby they were trying to escape to the Orient.

At this darkest hour, when their lot was like that of Israel in Egypt, "making bricks without straw," this second Mohammedan State became a new land of refuge; for the new monarchy opened a door of welcome to all refugees, Jewish and Christian. Here they were free to live; here free to worship. So, the fall of the Greek Empire did not mean the fall of the Greek Church—for this Turkish Charlemagne even regulated the appointment of a Patriarch over the Church and a Chief Rabbi over the Synagogue; he chose a Jew for his physician-in-chief (Chacham-Bashi).

The first Jewish appointee (Moses Kapsali), was given a seat in the *Divan* (State Council) and placed at the head of the Jews of Turkey, sanctioning rabbinical appointments and regulating the taxes. Here again was a *Nagid* (an office something like that of Resh Galutha, that had been abolished in 940 p. 42). This territory being the original home of the Karaites, the dying movement now revived awhile; but its intellectual era was over. Hither fled monk-ridden Israel from Germany and Hungary, from Poland and the Rhine—later from Spain. The new refugees sent urgent messages to their brethren in bondage to come to the new Canaan. They were glowing pictures of a land flowing with milk and

honey and "with none to fray them away,"—where they could enjoy unmolested the fruit of their toil.

With influential positions at court, with unrestricted commerce, with freedom of worship, movement, domicile and dress, there began for them here an era of prosperity that was to continue unbroken for two hundred years. So the brand was again snatched from the burning and Israel was given a new lease of life once more.

Notes.

Poland:

Casimir the Great was the most enlightened monarch of his age and was called the Polish Solomon. He stigmatized persecution as "an insult to the common sense as well as the conscience of the people." His welcome to the oppressed Jews to come to his land and his defence of their cause against the clergy occurred *prior* to his love of the Jewish maid, Esterka, and not a result of it, as the story goes.

The Host:

The "host" was the name given in the Catholic Church to the consecrated bread of the Eucharist. It is derived from the Latin *hostia,* victim, for it is treated as a sacrifice. It is unleavened in some churches, as it is commemorative of the "last (Passover) supper." The belief that this bread becomes mystically transformed into the body of the "Savior," is known as the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Greek Church:

The form of Christianity of the Eastern Roman Empire was known as the Greek Church. Russia is its centre today. Doctrinally it is similar to Catholicism; but it does not acknowledge the Pope.

Theme for Discussion:

Why was Poland more tolerant when less civilized?

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SPANISH INQUISITION.

The story of Castile and Aragon as separate kingdoms is drawing to an end. The closing days in Castile were stormy. The weak but well disposed Henry IV gave opportunity for uprisings in general and attacks on Maranos in particular. Alfonso de Spina, a Franciscan monk, added his virulent and slanderous pen to the "good cause." So, although the king had a Jewish physician and tax farmer, the reactionaries bullied him into signing new anti-Jewish statutes. An uprising against him and the placing of his brother Alphonso on the throne in 1465, gave pretext for a "blood accusation" and massacre. Without such pretext a Jewish slaughter occurred near Valladolid in 1470. A Marano girl's splashing some water on an image of the Virgin was amply sufficient reason for yet another anti-Jewish outbreak in Cordova in 1472, which spread to many towns. Though all such attacks on Maranos and such edicts against Jews were distinctly against the interests of the State.

Union of Aragon and Castile.

Yet the Jews used their means and the Maranos their influence, which was still considerable, to bring about the marriage between the new Queen of Castile, Isabella, and the new King of Aragon, Ferdinand, against much State opposition. Their money suitably equipped the impoverished king to appear suitably before Isabella, and he was the guest in Toledo of Abraham Senior, who es-

corted him into the royal presence. For the Jews had every reason to expect well from the royal pair. Ferdinand's father, Juan II, had been their friend and a Jewish physician had restored his eyesight. So they "put their trust in princes," and looked for betterment of conditions. In 1474 the two kingdoms, Aragon and Castile, were united—comprising nearly all Spain. It became now an absolute monarchy. "In union there is strength." Alas, here it was the union of avarice with fanaticism. How fatal this united kingdom was to be to the destiny of Spanish Israel! It introduced the Inquisition in Spain. This was the beginning of the end.

Origin of the Inquisition.

It is hard for a Jew to write temperately of that institution known as the Inquisition, yet we must endeavor to recount it in a historic spirit. How was it that men and women, much like ourselves, came to call good what we call evil, to give religious sanction to what we call crime, and in the name of God should have perpetrated deeds so ungodly? First, we must discipline our imagination to depict an era in which bigotry was almost a virtue, liberality almost a vice, and religious freedom treated as a menace to society.

What was then the logic of the Inquisition, at its best, when fostered by mistaken but sincere men—omitting its consideration as a policy for political and material ends, which it later became? It was based first on the theory of an infallible Church, which in the opinion of its priests, possessed the whole truth with regard to God, the soul and the future. From this it follows that all other religions were in error to the extent that they deviated from the theology of Christianity. False

beliefs, it was supposed, doomed the individual to perdition. Hence the obligation felt to eradicate wrong doctrine. But this theory or duty at once made the priests the most dangerous of tyrants, and the people the most abject of slaves. We shall see later how this ecclesiastical power in the hands of unscrupulous men put in their hands the machinery for indulging their worst passions.

The Inquisition is earlier than its name. Already in the time of Constantine of the fourth century, the Church was given power to deal with paganism and to eradicate it. When we reach the twelfth century paganism was no longer extant in Christian lands. It had died out or had been wiped out. But there were differences of opinion between Christian and Christian on theological niceties. Those who conformed to the prevailing phase of Christianity were called orthodox, the divergent minorities were called heretics. Creeds were drawn up by Church Councils, less to teach the faith to the people than to test their orthodoxy. Heretics, though believing in the fundamental doctrines of the Church, were given short shrift. The persecution and massacre of the Albigenses have already been related (pp. 141, 149, 150).

In Troyes, France, about the year 1280 seventy-three Jews were tried by an ecclesiastical court and burnt at the stake. In the twelfth century distinct investigators or inquisitors were appointed to scrutinize the fidelity of the people to the prevailing Church. New institutes and institutions were now coming into vogue that were slowly and surely giving the Church further reaching dominance over the masses. Auricular confession was introduced by the Pope, thereby granting to the priests the perilous opportunity of extorting the secrets of the

individual and his family. Special organizations of men known as Friars, more fanatic than the clergy, were now forming, whose function it was to travel through different lands to aid the bishops in ferreting out those who harbored heretic views. St. Dominic had founded the famous order of Dominican Friars, who made it their special duty to organize tribunals for heresy trials. In the year 1229, at the Council of Toulouse, this Dominican Inquisition was organized, taking from the feudal barons and even from the local priests the power of dealing with "infidelity" among the members of their flock. So that date might be taken as the year of the institution of the Inquisition proper. A complete detective system was planned by it. At times unscrupulous means were used to surround the defense with a criminal charge; and since the wealth of the accused went to the tribunal it was always in its interest to convict. The institution soon spread through France, touched Germany and entered Spain.

The Spanish Inquisition.

It was not till it reached Spain that it was invested with full power and went into active operation. In Spain it was reorganized as the "New Inquisition"; then its real terrors began. A few scattered Jews had suffered death at its hands in other lands, but it was in Spain that it began to write a further bloody chapter in Jewish annals.

The Spanish Inquisition of the fifteenth century was a necessary sequel of the fanaticism of the fourteenth. It was against the Maranos, created by the forced baptisms of 1391, rather than against backsliding Christians that it was directed. For while a few had become wholly

Christian, having lost the traditions of their Jewish ancestry, in very many families the Jewish religion was faithfully transmitted and kept alive by instruction from avowed Jews—in some cases intensified by the strained situation. The Maranos held high positions among the nobility, in the army and even in the Church, forming about a third of the community. Yet it was an open secret that they washed off the baptismal water from their children's heads; so they were regarded as the most stubborn heretics the Church ever encountered.

The only right way to solve the situation was to have permitted them to renounce the creed that had been forced upon them. This was denied; even their further emigration was now prevented. The Dominicans preferred a new form of compulsion—the Inquisition. King Henry IV had already been asked to grant the introduciton of this "Holy Office" into Spain. He had refused. But now that Ferdinand and Isabella were on the throne, the Dominican friar, De Ojeda, found a willing response to his scheme.

Ferdinand seized the idea with avidity, for this avaricious man saw in it the means of filling his empty coffers from the confiscated estates of condemned Maranos. So this Pharoah, who "knew not Joseph," in ingratitude and cruelty, now proposed to reward the people who had aided his royal suit with their wealth and influence, by despoiling and slaying them. He was in desperate financial straits and was imposing unwelcome taxes to maintain his State. Here was a convenient remedy presented by the friars.

To the credit of Isabella be it said it was purely in the interest of her faith that she approved the introduction of the Inquisition in her dominions. So although

the complacent bribe-taking Pope Sixtus IV issued the necessary bull for its inauguration, it was Isabella who succeeded in delaying its introduction for two years, hoping at first that milder measures might be adopted for putting down heresy. She is an excellent instance of many a mediæval lady whom the confessional had reduced to spiritual slavery. Already in her childhood, a bigoted and masterful priest had exacted from her the vow that when she should come into her kindom she would begin a war of extermination against heretics.

So, as the king's greed could no longer be restrained, in the year 1480, in spite of energetic opposition both of Christians and Maranos, and in spite of the expenditure of great wealth to counteract or further delay it, the dreadful machinery was set in motion. Three Inquisitors were appointed to judge and condemn heretics and to confiscate their property. With malignant craft they planned its modus operandi. Some of the following regulations were instituted at once; others mark later stages in the growth of its mechanism.

A special watch was placed over the Maranos to see whether they observed any rite of what the Church was pleased to style "the dead law of Moses." If they were seen to bless a child without making the sign of the cross, or to eat meat on a Church fast day, or to read a psalm without closing it with the Gloria (acknowledgment of the Trinity), or if they called their children by Jewish names—they were immediately brought before the dreadful tribunal. The individual under suspicion was pounced upon without preparation. He might be sitting quietly with his family when, after knocking on the door, bailiffs would stalk in and with the words, "in the name of the holy Inquisition," arrest him. Guilty or innocent, the victim was incarcerated in a dungeon at

the pleasure of the tribunal. The prison walls were perforated with unseen holes through which his every action could be watched. Even then he was not informed of the exact charge against him or of the accusing witness. He was told to confess his own particular heresy; if not, whether guilty or innocent, he was put to the torture. The imprisonment itself in underground chambers with insufficient food was itself a species of torture. But the actual tortures—performed in subterranean caverns, so that the victim's cries could not be heard—consisted of twisting the thumbs in screws, driving wedges against their bodies, or putting on their feet special shoes to inflict agony. Sometimes the unbearable suffering drove the victim insane; it always reduced him to a hysterical condition in which he was ready to confess whatever was desired. Only after the confession was the accused informed of the exact charge against him. If he had any defence he could take a lawyer of *their* choosing. When investigators were appointed they hardly dared report in favor of the prisoner for fear of being suspected themselves.

Where a period of grace was allowed for voluntary confession, complete pardon was bestowed only if the confession included the betrayal of other persons, so that the very confessions were cruelties. Friends were encouraged to betray friends, with the assurance that the name of the informer would never be divulged to the victim. Every individual was *per se* a possible informer against his neighbor. Here was offered awful temptation for private malice or revenge. Even children were encouraged to inform against their parents.

The First Auto-Da-Fe.

Such terribly complete procedure brought at once a

METHODS OF TORTURE OF THE INQUISITION.

rich haul—fifteen thousand unfortunates were crowded into the prisons. The first tribunal was set up in Seville. On February 6th, 1481, the first *auto-da-fe* took place; this phrase meaning "act of faith," was applied also to the elaborate procession to the execution and its accompanying ceremonial. Here at the quæmedero, place of burning, six Maranos were burned alive and their wealth, of course, confiscated. But the numbers rapidly grew. In the first year, though the Inquisition was confined to southern Spain, 2,300 were burnt in Seville and Cadiz. Ever so many Maranos saved themselves by flight.

Each auto-da-fe was a gruesome spectacle. A bell tolled in the early morning to summon the populace to the place of execution—or shall we say of sacrifice—and to see the great procession arrive. First came the Benedictine monks, bearing the flag of the Inquisition; next followed the penitents, their lives spared, but shorn of their property. After these followed the condemned, barefooted, clothed in the *"san benito,"* a garment suggestively painted with red flames and fiery devils, with pasteboard hats similarly decorated. Each carried a green candle in the hand. Next the effigies of escaped victims, whose property was to be confiscated even though in the hands of heirs faithful to the church. At the rear of the procession were brought black coffins containing the bones of those adjudged heretics after their deaths, the property of whose heirs was likewise seized. Thus none escaped this relentless institution which followed up its victims with ignominy even beyond the grave.

An officer now struck each prisoner a blow on the breast indicating that they were given over to the "secular arm"—*i. e.*, the State. This was done to keep up the

fiction that the Church itself never shed blood. The prisoners were then fettered. If they confessed at this last moment they were strangled before burning; the "unrepentant" were burnt alive.

The debauched public came to enjoy the sight of their fellowmen done to death. Grotesquely treated as a holy pageant, the auto-da-fe usually took place on Sunday. It often lasted from early morn till late at night if the supply of victims was sufficiently plentiful. Sometimes there were so many that they could not supply separate stakes for each, but had to build a series of pens which could be ignited the more easily. So Titus in the year 69 had not sufficient crosses to crucify his Jewish prisoners.

The executions and confiscations that were really murders and robberies were not permitted to go on without protest. Even Pope Sixtus, who cared only for revenue, was induced to issue a reprimand to prevent a scandal. He refused Ferdinand the permission to set up the tribunal in other Spanish provinces. But the refusal was withdrawn on the plea of gold, and in 1482 the Inquisition was introduced in Aragon and in Sicily, which was allied with it. Its terrors also penetrated to the adjacent islands, Barcelona and Majorca. When the mercenary aim was so patent as even to awaken Christian indignation, Sixtus again mildly advised restriction to save appearances. But every favorable bull, for which he was richly paid, was always ultimately withdrawn on receiving a larger compensation from the Inquisition side.

Torquemada.

In 1483 Thomas de Torquemada, a Dominican monk, was appointed Inquisitor General. Practically all Spain now came under his cruel control. During his fifteen

years' regime the Inquisition reached its climax in the completeness of its incriminating devices. He quelled all opposition. The slaying of an Inquisitor in Saragossa (Aragon) gave revengeful opportunity for the slaughter of two hundred souls and the holding of two auto-da-fes monthly in that city for twenty years. In Toledo, Torquemada dared to bid the rabbis pronounce a *cherem* (excommunication) against the Jews who refused to inform the authorities of the secret lapse of Maranos, *i. e.,* to hand over their own brethren in blood and faith to their enemies for destruction! In the year 1486 nearly twenty-five hundred were burnt in Toledo alone, and nigh a thousand subjected to humiliating penance.

The tribunal revealed varied types of character. Some saving themselves by confession were readmitted to the Church. Others voluntarily went to the stake, glad to become martyrs for their religion. The butcheries were kept going at a merry pace—in Catalonia, in spite of strong opposition; in Barcelona and Majorca two hundred were burned in 1487.

During Torquemada's fifteen years in office he condemned over 8,000 souls to be burnt alive. During the regime of his successor, the Dominican Deza, and Lucero, his assistant, two men of infamous repute, 1,600 victims were sacrificed at this blazing Tophet. During all this carnage the monarchs sat serene. For the imprisonments and burnings now conducted on a wholesale scale brought in splendid revenues.

No wonder that Ferdinand's successors continued it and the Philips of the sixteenth century, and that Charles V should have prevented Pope Leo X from issuing a bull restricting the powers of the "Holy Office." So this blighting institution was destined to continue till the

early part of the nineteenth century. Its three century regime is dyed deep with the blood of thirty-two thousand souls.

Notes and References.

The Inquisition:

Dr. Henry C. Lea writes, in his *Inquisition in the Middle Ages:*

"It is not too much to say that for the infinite wrongs committed on the Jews during the Middle Ages, and for the prejudices that are even yet rife in many quarters, the Church is mainly, if not wholly, responsible. It is true that occasionally she lifted her voice in mild remonstrance when some massacre occurred more atrocious than usual, but these massacres were the direct outcome of the hatred and contempt which she so zealously inculcated, and she never took steps by punishment to prevent their repetition."

Read "The Inquisition in Judaism," a sermon addressed to Jewish martyrs on the occasion of an *auto-da-fe,* and a reply by Carlos Vero, translated by Moses Mocatta. London: Wertheimer, 1845.

One voice alone was raised in defense of the victims of the Inquisition, that of Hernando del Pulgar. His moderate rebuke brought on him a charge of heresy. Hence all further defenders were silenced.

Theme for Discussion:

Did the Inquisition aid or injure the cause of Christianity?

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE SPANISH EXPULSION.

The Inquisition was not ostensibly directed against professing Jews, but against neo-Christians suspected of being Jews. It concerned itself with the heretic within the Church, not with the "unbeliever" outside of it. But with this very programme, ultimately it reached the Jew. For these Maranos desiring that their children be secretly reared in the tenets of Judaism, needed the co-operation of their brethren in faith, to supply them with prayerbooks and manuals, to inform them of the occurrence of the Jewish holidays and to send them matzoth on Passover.

It is true that prior to the introduction of the Inquisition the Jews were confined to their Juderias in order to separate them from both Maranos and Christians. But even after the institution of the "Holy Office" its alert spies could not always prevent the prohibited intercourse. Some Christians still preferred entrusting their sick to Jewish physicians and had more confidence in Jewish lawyers.

Granada Passes from Moslem to Christian.

In the meantime a great event occurred that indirectly tended to bring the Jewish status to a crisis. In 1491, after a ten-year's contest, their last stronghold in the Peninsula—Granada—was taken from the Moors. It was in 711 that the triumphant legions of the Crescent had reached Spain. That advent (with which this work

opens) made an epoch for the Jew, for Spain and for the world. Their nigh eight hundred years' regime which offered the favorable environment for a golden era for Jews and Judaism, and which had established a centre of enlightening culture in the midst of Europe's dark ages, came at last to an inglorious close. Spain was now a wholly Christian land. But instead of success bringing toleration it brought fanaticism to a climax. This was its logic: "Why should a Christian realm any longer harbor the enemies of the Cross?" The Jew was a thorn in its side and helped to maintain the intolerable Marano situation. Granada had brought a rich loot to the State which, together with the booty acquired by the Inquisition, made the financial aid of the Jews no longer necessary.

So on March 31st, 1492, was issued the terrible proclamation that within four months the Jews must leave Castile, Aragon, Sicily and Sardinia, on penalty of death.

Abarbanel.

Who, at this critical hour, was at the head of Spanish Israel? In these bitter times, strange to say, Isaac Abravanel (or Abarbanel), a refugee from Portugal, was still engaged in the service of the State—for he was a financial genius. He was a scholar, too. He had written some Bible commentaries and some apologetic works in defense of Judaism, which were widely read both by Jews and Christians of a later day. For he was at home in the writings of the Church as well as of the Synagogue. He was also something of a philosopher, but he has little to tell us of value in that field. He lacked the logical and analytic mind to distinguish between rationalism and mysticism, though he seemed to grasp better, perhaps, than most Jewish scholars the historic back-

ground of each era. But his greatness lay in his knowledge of "affairs." Indeed he was the last of that line of Spanish statesmen that began with Samuel Ibn Nagdela (chap. viii).

It was this man who, now that the edict had gone forth, concentrated all his efforts to avert the blow. He appeared before Ferdinand—so runs one story—accom-

ISAAC ABARBANEL

panied by some Christian friends and guaranteed to collect 600,000 crowns (30,000 ducats) if the Jews could be permitted to stay. Ferdinand, the avaricious, hesitated. Then Torquemada, the bigoted Inquisitor General, theatrically entered the presence of the King and holding aloft a silver crucifix, cried out, "Judas Iscariot sold the Savior for thirty pieces of silver; would you sell him for thirty thousand ducats?" That clever thrust

told. It decided the really religious though fanatic Isabella. The Jews must go.

Jews Expelled in 1492.

Like Haman's edict of extermination on the Jews of Persia, fell the edict of expulsion on those of Spain. But there was no Esther on the throne to redeem them now. For fifteen centuries Jews in smaller or greater numbers had lived in Spain. In this as in some other European countries, their settlement preceded the introduction of Christianity. We have to go back twelve centuries to find the first discrimination against the Jews by the Spanish Church. As much as any land could be home, Spain was home to them; aye, and more than any other European land. For England had expelled her 16,000 Jews in 1290, and the embargo had not yet been lifted. Their history in France was so far largely made up of a series of expulsions. In the different German States their tenure had always been precarious. In Poland they had only settled for two or three centuries. In other lands their numbers were insignificant; while Northern lands they had hardly reached at all.

In Spain they had dwelt longer than Israel and Judah had lived in Canaan! For from the monarchy of Saul, about 1100 B. C. E. to the Babylonian exile was but five hundred years; from the Exile to their final overthrow and dispersion was barely seven hundred more. But no Titus' arch was to be erected to mark their banishment now. Yet next to that dispersion in the year 70, by Rome, it was, considered in all its consequences, perhaps the most terrible calamity in Israel's tragic annals.

The edict, cruel in its general character, was still more cruel in its details. For the avaricious Ferdinand utilized it as a means of despoiling the Jews as he had used the

Inquisition with which to despoil the Maranos. The exiled Jews were forbidden to take with them gold, silver, money or non-exportable articles. Their houses and lands they had to dispose of for trifles—a vineyard for a piece of linen! Their synagogues became churches, their schools monasteries.

It is true that money can be transmitted by commercial notes or bills of exchange (invented by the Jews by proverbial necessity). But these are comparatively modern devices. We have already indicated in chap. xxxii that Italy was the only land where anything like these modern conditions prevailed. Where they prevailed in Spain at all, they were in the hands of Jews (and Maranos) who had developed a genius for finance; some slight avail was made of it now. How pathetic it is to read, that not allowed to take the precious metals or coin with them, some carried away fragments of the tombstones of their ancestors. No preventive edict interfered there!

In Aragon, where Ferdinand had more exclusive control, all Jewish monies and debts were confiscated—this as a means of forcing the impoverished victims into the Church. This brought out at least the lights in this dark picture. Persecution revealed the faith and heroism of this long-suffering people. For although even emigration *was not made possible for all,* as between apostacy and martyrdom few chose the former. Never, too, was the Jewish dictum "All Israelites are responsible one for the other" more nobly fulfilled. The rich shared with the poor the remnants of their fortunes "snatched from the burning." Maranos also aided their brethren at the peril of their lives.

It was on August 2d, strangely coincident with the ninth of Ab (so fatally significant in Jewish annals),

that Israel took up the wanderer's staff and left the inhospitable land. Not a triumphant exodus, "with a high hand," as from Egypt, but a humiliating exit. Thus (at the lowest estimate) two hundred thousand observers of what the Inquisition called "the dead Law of Moses" shook the dust of Spain from their feet without knowing where they would find a place to lay their heads.

The loss was not all theirs. Many towns dwindled into villages after their departure. With the expulsion of the Jews (and with the later banishment of the Moors) Spain lost her most industrious subjects—her merchants, her artisans, her scholars, and her healers. Retribution was to come, but not at once. The new wealth, the new conquests, the acquired realm beyond the seas, all brought for a while greater prestige to Spain and she reached her zenith when her Charles V was chosen Emperor. Then came the anti-climax. The Inquisition that temporarily brought wealth to Spain ultimately ruined it.

Havens of Refuge.

To follow the exiles. Many took refuge in Portugal, and of their fate we will tell in the following chapter. Some twelve thousand were given a short respite in Navarre. But heartless Ferdinand followed them there and compelled Navarre to offer them choice of baptism or exile. The rest had to embark in the ships provided by the king to sail to whatever ports would give them an entry. But open doors were few. Overcrowding in the ships brought the natural consequence of contagious disease, which would bar admission to refugees even today. Some of the hapless exiles had to encamp in open plains, like the earlier fugitive Israel in the wilderness, in earlier flight from Egypt. Many starved to

death. Many to save themselves from starvation returned in despair to Spain to accept Christianity. It meant bread for their children. Some of these may have gone to swell the ranks of Maranos elsewhere.

Italy, the progressive, for the most part, received them kindly. Naples hospitably opened its doors. Nor would its humane king drive them forth—in spite of the protests of his people, when pestilence, due to their treatment on the ships of passage, broke out among them. He even established hospitals for their sick. Hither came Abarbanel, not too despairing of heart to continue his literary labors. Great men are rarely allowed to linger in obscurity; just as he was chosen by the Spanish State when driven from Portugal, so now he was offered a post of financial responsibility in Naples when driven from Spain. Fresh woes yet awaited him and his more scholarly son Leon. In the evening of his life we find adverse fortune had driven him to Venice. Even here his genius for financial administration singled him out for distinction and counsel.

Across the narrow stretch of the Mediterranean to Africa, many refugees sailed. But only permitted to build huts outside the town walls, many starved to death and some children were sold as slaves.

We have not space to tell of the sufferings and indignities they encountered when knocking at the doors of most of the "civilized" nations of the world. When nature ceased her ravage with famine and plague, man began with lust and greed. They well might have cried with the Israel that fled from Egypt: "Were there no graves in Spain that we need have left it to be slain in other lands?"

Genoa, unlike Naples, only allowed them to encamp on the shore. When their starving children drifted into

the town they were given bread on condition of baptism. The renunciation of Judaism was also the basis of admission at other ports. In some, their own brethren were induced to reject them for fear of the plague. But the compassionate Jews of Greece sold their synagogue ornaments to feed their brethren and redeem them from slavery.

Well treated in Spain while it was Moslem, it was a Moslem land that now gave them heartiest welcome—Turkey (p. 330). The Sultan Bajazet II threatened with death whoever dared oppress them. The bulk of the Jews in Turkey to-day, or in the larger Turkey of yesterday, are descendants of the exiles from Spain.

The wanderings of smaller groups we cannot follow in detail, nor have we space to record their privations and sufferings, of which stories have come down to us from many quarters and in many forms. Spanish exiles were to be found in Alexandria and Morocco in Asia Minor, in the East and the West Indies, in the Old and the New World.

In North and South America those denied the right of being allies of Spain at home became its rivals abroad —diverting its trade to Holland and Italy. Thus was Israel enabled to show gratitude to its friends and visit retribution on its foes.

Lines on the Expulsion.

"Look, they move! No comrades near but curses;
Tears gleam in beards of men sore with reverses;
Flowers from fields abandoned, loving nurses;
Fondly deck the woman's raven hair.

Faded, scentless flowers that shall remind them
Of their precious homes and graves behind them;
Old men, clasping Torah-scrolls, unbind them,
Lift the parchment flags and silent lead.

Mock not with thy light, O sun, our morrow,
Cease not, cease not, O ye songs of sorrow;
From what land a refuge can we borrow,
Weary, thrust-out, God-forsaken we?

Could ye, suff'ring souls, peer through the Future,
From despair ye would awake to rapture;
Lo! The Genoese boldly steers to capture
Freedom's realm beyond, an unsailed sea!"

Translated from the German of Ludwig August Frankl by Minnie D. Louis.

NOTES AND REFERENCES.

The Expulsions of Jews and Moors:

As late as 1480 the Spanish Cortes decided that Hebrews and Mohammedans should be assigned certain districts, where they could live freely and build synagogues and mosques. Therefore, Ferdinand did not consult the Cortes on the edict of expulsion.

The expulsion of the Moors of Granada was in violation of treaty, since they had yielded on condition that religious liberty should be granted to them and their posterity. Ferdinand and Isabella took an oath to that effect. But the Primate of Spain, Ximenes, told them they were under no obligation to tolerate the Moslem. Therefore, when the Moors resisted his attempt to force Christianity upon them, he informed the monarchs that their rebellion absolved them from their compact.

The expulsions were followed by the decline of civic liberty of the Spaniards.

Read. *Religious Intolerance in Spain.* De Castro.

Theme for Discussion:

To what extent may Spain's decline be attributed to the banishment of the Jews and Moors?

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LAST YEARS IN PORTUGAL.

Toleration had lingered a little longer in Portugal. The badge had been imposed by Alphonso IV in 1325, but then his successor had removed it. While fanaticism raged in 1391 in Spain, there was still sanity and security in Portugal. John (or Joao), 1411, whose life had been saved by the high-minded David Negro, naturally befriended his savior's co-religionists. As in Spain they were singled out for royal distinction on the one hand, and had to run the gauntlet of ecclesiastical hate on the other.

The long and kindly reign of Alphonso V, from 1438 to 1481, mark the last favorable years for Israel in the Peninsula. The attack on the Juderia of Lisbon in 1449 did not meet with his approval. It was he who appointed Isaac Abarbanel State Treasurer. As long as the power was his, this last Jewish statesman showed himself a friend in need to his brethren. It was his energy and means that helped to free Jewish captives made slaves in Morocco.

But as soon as the crafty John II came to the throne, toleration's knell was rung. Only the timely warning of a friend enabled Abarbanel to escape to Spain with his life. Here his gifts were brought to the royal notice and Ferdinand found him valuable in financing the Moorish war and in provisioning the army. His attempt to stay the expulsion has already been told.

Spanish Refugees in Portugal.

The Portuguese king was a dissembler who assumed a friendly external to further unfriendly ends. At first he

opened his land as an asylum for Spain's exiles, at least for eight months' respite. Rabbi Aboab arranged the terms of admission. When the months of grace were up, he broke many of the promises made to aid their departure. On the ships, tardily supplied, the men were robbed and the women outraged. The cruel sailors landed some on desolate coasts and left them to their fate. Some were seized by pirates. Many prevented from leaving Portugal by treacherous devices, were enslaved because they stayed. Their children were torn from their parents regardless of their heart rending cries, and taken to the island of St. Thomas, on the west coast of Africa. Those who did not die on the way were reared in the faith of their parents' foes.

John II's successor, Manuel, styled the Great, began his reign in 1495 with a humane treatment of the Jews, freeing without payment those who had been enslaved. Abraham Zacuto, the Jewish astronomer, was taken into his service. Humane he might have continued, but desiring to marry Isabella of Spain, who inherited, with her name, all her mother's fanaticism, untempered by her mother's softness, he had to submit to her bigoted conditions—Jewish expulsion. Manuel the Great—but not great enough to resist that barbaric demand!

Portuguese Expulsion.

So, against the advice of many of his counselors, he reluctantly consented, though he indulgently put off the expulsion for a year, 1497. But once under his wife's fanatic dominance he went even further than his Spanish exemplars. All children between certain ages (the authorities differ as to the period) *were to be left behind* by their exiled parents, to be brought up in the Church. The tragic episodes of the Crusades were here repeated.

of which we have the unbiased testimony of a Christian bishop. Once more we see Jewish parents slaying their offspring and then slaying themselves. Some Christians, like the Egyptian midwives of old, took sides against their sovereigns, for they, too, were mothers and fathers. But the perfidious king went further yet. Some twenty thousand souls who, trusting to royal clemency, had lingered till the last day of grace, were informed that the time for departure had expired and the alternative of Christianity with honors or Judaism with slavery was proffered. As they remained invincibly loyal, conversion was literally forced upon them.

So Portugal now had its Maranos, or Neo-Christians, whose conformity to the Church was leniently overlooked. Still, many desiring to escape from this double life, emigrated to Barbary, Italy and Turkey—until further emigration was prevented.

In 1506 the Dominican friars incited a mob to heartlessly massacre these Neo-Christians. Drought and plague as well as heresy were ascribed to them. But this wanton cruelty created a reaction in the king's heart, whose fanaticism ceased with his wife's death. The persecutors were punished and full permission of emigration was granted.

Under Joao III, who came to the throne in 1521, Marano emigration was again restricted and conformity to Christian life strictly enforced. The climax of woe came in 1531 with the institution of the awful Inquisition.

For half a century the Jews had fought its introduction. But all opposition was finally quelled and the "Holy Office" completely installed. But the postponement and final enforcement were largely affected by a series of romantic circumstances entirely unforeseen, recalling the story of David Alroy.

David Reubeni and Solomon Molcho.

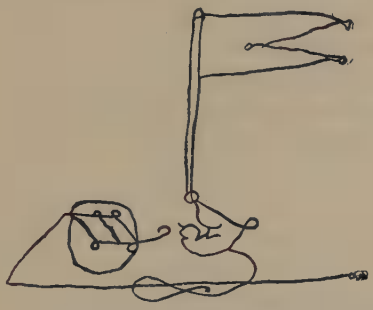
A Jewish adventurer calling himself David Reubeni, and hailing from Arabia, startled the Moslem and the Christian world with the story of a Jewish kingdom in the East. He was favorably received by Pope Clement VII in Rome, and by Joao III in Portugal, who half believed in his mission to lead a Jewish crusade against the Turks in the Holy Land. The Portuguese king at the same time saw here a political opportunity to win back the spice trade which had been taken by the Turk. So for a time there was a friendly attitude towards the secret Jews who in their turn looked upon Reubeni almost as a Messiah.

The incident took a new turn when the high-born Diego Pirez of Marano ancestry, became a convert to Judaism through Reubeni and took the name of Solomon Molcho. He was a scholar, courtier and a Messianic visionary. Bar Cochba had not in Rabbi Akiba a more devoted ally than Reubeni found in Molcho. (*T. Y.*, p. 211.) In both instances, too, the disciple was of purer and loftier character than the man he humbly followed.

Sailing to Turkey, Molcho made a sensation there and inspired audiences by his preaching the speedy coming of the Messiah. Next he turned to Rome and donning a beggar's rags he indulged in visions of the Messiah he half believed himself to be. Fearlessly he appeared in the presence of the impressionable Clement VII, who gave him welcome while the Pope's subordinates were seeking to put him to death. Heedless of danger, for he courted martyrdom, we next find him preaching publicly in the synagogue and indulging in prophetic ecstasies. Condemned to death as a traducer of the Church, he was snatched from the burning by his friend, the Pope.

His last dramatic act was an appeal made jointly with Reubeni to the Emperor Charles V (of Spain) to lead a Jewish army against the Turks. The less impressionable Emperor handed them both over to the Inquisition. Reubeni probably died in one of its dungeons. Molcho before the fires were kindled to consume him at Mantua was promised his freedom if he returned to the Church. He replied that he preferred death as a Jew to life as a Christian and rejoiced to die for the cause of the Faith he loved.

So passed a noble soul whose fantastic imagination, while it won him a famous career, prevented his becoming of any real service to the Synagogue.



AUTOGRAPH OF SOLOMON MOLCHO

Portuguese Inquisition, 1531.

Indeed, the momentary friendliness towards the Maranos occasioned by Reubeni's appearance and promise was followed by severe reaction after his bubble had burst. The Inquisition long planned, but postponed, was now inaugurated in 1531. It needed but a slanderous charge of image desecration to bring the climax. The steady emigration of Maranos was now stopped by the Inquisitors eager for victims. In Spain, the Inquisition preceded the Expulsion; in Portugal, it followed it.

We need hardly recite the details of the sad chronicle. Its abortive methods and its strange mingling of bigotry and avarice have been told in the story of the Inquisition in Spain—its precedent and counterpart. Its tortures were just as fiendish. It was but a change of background. Gratefully we record that the Franciscan Da Silva opposed its introduction and declined the position of Inquisitor. Alas, there were many eager to take it. The Maranos still kept up their fight against it, with its forced conversions and its confiscations, for a year or two. But in 1541 we find the auto-da-fe, with accompanying human burnings in Lisbon, Evora and Cambria. Soon it spread like a pestilence over all Portugal. One Inquisitor did not hesitate to resort to forgery to force confessions and even hired criminals to testify.

Owing to tremendous opposition that its scandals created, some Maranos were permitted to return to Judaism unmolested and were released from the overcrowded prisons. But as soon as the outcry had died down, the old tyranny was resumed. Thus it continued with ebb and flow. Said an English consul who witnessed some burnings in the presence of the Queen, "their crime is their possession of wealth."

Finally in 1557, the remaining Maranos, on the payment of an enormous indemnity, were allowed to depart. Retribution came earlier to Portugal than to Spain. For in 1578 this very indemnity was utilized to undertake a war in Africa against the Moslem. From the disastrous defeat that followed, Portugal never quite recovered.

Still the Inquisition went on all through the seventeenth century; it continued while Portugal became subject to Spain and also after its subsequent independence. Its havoc even extended to the Portuguese colonies in the New World. So in distant Brazil its long arm

reached out to Israelites once more and brought some back as victims to Lisbon.

More even than in Spain, the Portuguese Inquisition is a story of intrigue and counter-intrigue; a bull would be bought from one Pope to sanction it, then from another to restrict it.

It will carry us beyond the epoch covered by this volume to trace its bloody trail through the eighteenth century, till its power was broken through the exposure of its infamies by King Joseph. The moment its victims were given a civilized trial, where the accused could be informed of the charges against him and of the names of his accusers and could also choose his own counsel—the Inquisition rapidly collapsed. It could flourish only in the dark; like noisome insects, it shunned the light. It hardly needed the earthquake of 1750 to destroy its tribunal building. Still not till after the nineteenth century had dawned, not till 1821, was it officially abolished and the nation awoke from its nightmare.

Later Fortunes of the Sephardim.

The expulsion from the Peninsula of Spain and Portugal closes an epoch in Jewish history. The disaster affected materially and sympathetically the whole Jewish world. Once more Zion was laid low—another centre of Jewish life and learning erased from the map. The bulk of Spanish Israel was now lost to Jewry by baptism or death; lost, too, the bulk of their wealth, estimated at thirty million ducats.

But exiled and impoverished the *Sephardim* (Spanish and Portuguese Jews), lost naught of their dignity of bearing or their cultured manners, which centuries of distinction had given them. Their fallen state even exaggerated their pride. The Peninsula had exploited and

expelled them, but it had not broken their spirit. In their fine bearing through it all they stood in strong contrast with their cowed and somewhat shiftless *Ashkenazim* (German, chiefly) brethren. So they held themselves aloof, keeping up their Spanish and Portuguese languages which they spoke with purity, as half sacred tongues. They maintained, too, their distinct synagogue ritual, that almost singled them out as a separate Jewish sect. As such they came to regard themselves and scorned union with the *Tedesco* (Spanish for German, slightingly used).

In spite of the barbaric treatment that marked the later years of the Jews in Spain, they never got over their attachment to it. Like no other country, outside of the Holy Land, it had the spell of Fatherland to them.

We have recounted the woes and the losses, yet some flotsam and jetsam was saved from the wreckage. Their wondrous recuperative powers were again exemplified. As in the earlier dispersion, here likewise there resulted some compensating good to Israel at large.

Wherever they came they were singled out for leadership. In Turkey they became the citizen class as merchants and artisans as well as physicians, linguists and teachers. Their advent in Constantinople increased the Jewish community there to 30,000. They formed the majority of the Jewish community of Salonica, making its language Spanish. They furnished its philosophers and astronomers and were largely instrumental in making it a Kabalistic centre.

They not only re-enforced the Jewish community of Jerusalem, but raised its whole status. This was true also of Safet in Galilee, where Joseph Saragossa became teacher and Dayan of his brethren. They established

new congregations in Damascus. Here, as elsewhere, fitness placed leadership in their hands.

One Spanish Jew leads a Moorish brigade in Fez, and another founds a college there. Many, like their illustrious predecessor Maimonides (an earlier fugitive from Spain) became rabbis and teachers in Egypt. One Spanish rabbi abolished the obsolete Selucidæan era (*T. Y.*, p. 28), still maintained by Egyptian Jews from pre-Maccabæan days, and introduced the traditional era of the world's creation—our custom now.

So the Jewish centre of gravity in learning and leadership was shifting East again—but only for a while.

NOTES AND REFERENCES.

Sephardic Ritual:

The Sephardim still maintain distinct and separate synagogues in the nations of the world to-day. Their liturgy varies slightly as well as their pronunciation of Hebrew.

Read Chapter on Safet in Schechter's *Studies in Judaism,* Second Series.

Theme for Discussion:

Compare the modern Jewish method of time measurement of the Jews with that of the Christians and the Mohammedans.

CARICATURE OF ISAAC OF NORWICH.

CHAPTER XL.

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

Island and peninsula nations are always maritime nations. Spain and Portugal formed no exception to this rule. We have already seen that these two lands under Moorish and also under earlier Christian rule were the culture centres of Europe. Not even later could Inquisitors and friars, while discouraging intellectual activity, quite petrify it. So for this double reason maritime enterprise and scientific invention (both now given such impetus by the spread of international commerce) still found their focus in Spain and Portugal.

Jewish Scientists in the Peninsula.

In this survey we must turn back to the period before the Expulsion.

Because of the high reputation of the Jews in the realm of science, especially in astronomy and mathematics, and because of the important posts of State held by them, we are almost prepared to learn that Jews contributed a large share towards naval projects, not only in financing them but also as nautical inventors, as expert counsellors and even as actual explorers.

Isaac Ibn Said, of Toledo (Don Zag) had already in the thirteenth century published astronomical tables. These Alphonsine Tables (p. 208) were used by the scientists of Germany, France, Italy, and even England. Abraham Zacuto invented a perpetual astronomical calendar of the seven planets. Joseph Vechino, a mathematician, who translated this work from the Hebrew into

Latin and Spanish, and also an inventor of nautical instruments, was one of those summoned by Joao II (John) of Portugal, to a nautical congress.

Other Jewish geographers were sent by this king to make explorations in Asia.

When Henry the Navigator, son of Joao I of Portugal, established a naval academy, he appointed as its director Maestre Jaime (whom Kayserling identifies as Jehuda Cresques, "the map Jew"), a mathematician, cartographer and maker of nautical instruments.

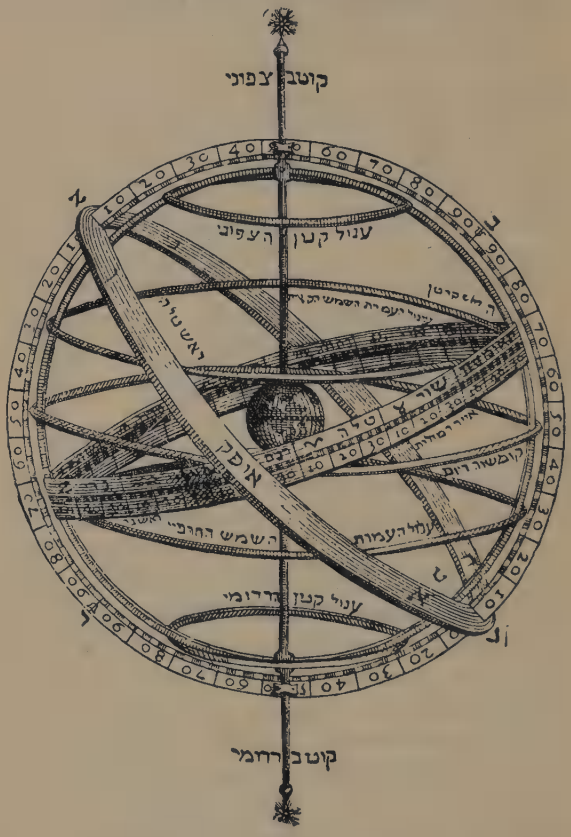
Portuguese Jews contributed much to the invention and improvement of the astrolabe by which mariners could direct their course across the trackless ocean, and devised instruments to determine the meridian altitude of the sun.

Columbus Aided by Jews.

Be it remembered that in the fifteenth century the Portuguese were the foremost navigators of the world. That is why *Christofero Colombo,* born in Genoa, 1446, left his country for Lisbon, the central port of maritime enterprise. Here among others, he met Joseph Vechino, who gave him a copy of his translation of Zacuto's astronomical tables. These became of great use to him in the voyages he was about to undertake. For, while prosecuting his studies he became fired with enthusiasm at the projects of the Portuguese navigators to find a safe ocean route to its new possessions in India. This land of gold was said to be the land (Cathay) of Prester-John, a presumed "priest-king" of a vague realm in Asia. He took voyages to the Azores, the Canaries, and the coast of Guinea, then the limits of European navigation.

Convinced of the feasibility of the plan to reach a

northwest passage, he outlined a project to lead a squadron across the sea (probably along the African coast) and presented it to the king about 1482. But the



AN ASTROLABE.

plan was dismissed by Joao II as too expensive in equipment and his council (Junta) on nautical affairs decided against it. But the king sent some of his own explorers to the East, utilizing the plan of Columbus; Jews partici-

pated in many ways. But they did not venture far from the accustomed routes. So, poor and dispirited, Colombo (or as he is better known in the Latinized form of his name "Columbus") left Portugal. After appealing in vain to the kings of Italy and France to take up and finance his project, he came to Spain and laid his ambitious plan before Ferdinand and Isabella.

It was about the year 1486, just when the Inquisition was committing its dreadful ravages among the Maranos, that he was given this royal audience. Detecting their respective weaknesses, Columbus shrewdly appealed to the avarice of Ferdinand—"it was a land of gold"—and to the religious zeal of Isabella, "it was a new field for the spread of Christianity."

Referred again to a commission of nautical scholars, they, like the Portuguese, also discredited his project. But a friend of Columbus, Diega de Deza, of Jewish descent, submitted the plan independently to a group of geographers and mathematicians, among them Abraham Zacuto. Their favorable endorsement induced the king to reconsider the matter. So while Columbus was not yet given the ships and equipment he desired, he was taken into the royal service.

He now met Abraham Senior, Isaac Abarbanel and Gabriel Sanchez, all of whom as State financiers rendered him valuable aid. He needed such friends at court, since the king was all too ready to forget him and his project in furthering other ambitions. The royal coldness may have been somewhat due to the overreaching demands of Columbus in asking not only that he be made admiral of the fleet, but also viceroy and governor of the territory he hoped to discover.

When about to turn in despair to the French king, it was again a Jew (a Marano) who took his cause to

heart and pleaded in his favor. This was Luis de Santangel, whose family had suffered so cruelly at the hands of the Inquisition, but whose valuable services were none the less in great demand by the State. His telling appeal won over the Queen; but she did not proffer to pawn her jewels, as the story goes. It was in fact Santangel himself who offered the five million marevedis necessary.

O the irony of history! On the very date of the announcement of the decree of expulsion of the Jews from Spain, a decree to equip this fleet of Columbus issued from the same royal hand. Aye, on the very day following Israel's departure, *i. e.,* on August 3d, 1492, Columbus, all his original demands granted, set forth with three ships to find a new route to gold-producing India.

Of the hundred men that composed his crew, some have been identified as Jews. For it was so hard to find volunteers to venture on the perilous voyage to an unknown destination, that even some criminals were pressed into service. But Jewish exiles whose outlook now was as perilous and destination as uncertain, would be likely to accept the alternative and be accepted in turn.

De Torres First to Set Foot in New World.

Of such Jews or Maranos, Luis de Torres, the ship doctors and some others are specifically mentioned. It is even conjectured that the sailor who espied a light on October 12th, after two months of peril on the watery waste, was a Marano. However that may be, certainly it was Luis de Torres, who with another companion was sent ashore as investigator to the island now known as Cuba. He was received with friendliness by the supposed Indian natives and arranged a treaty of peace. Indeed, de Torres ultimately settled here, being the first

European to adopt the local custom of smoking tobacco.

Columbus, having discovered as he thought the northwest passage to the Indies, gratefully sent the first news to his friend and patron, Santangel. He sent word also to Gabriel Sanchez, who gave it wide circulation through the press.

On the theory of the spiritual control of the earth, Pope Alexander V issued a bull conceding the territory discovered, to Spain for all future time, provided Catholicism be maintained there. The money, property, and valuables taken from the banished Jews or left in trust behind them in the hands of Maranos, amounting in all to about six million marevedis, was seized by the king and used to equip the second more pretentious armada of Columbus. On this voyage he discovered the Caribbee Islands; on a third he landed in South America.

Yet because the new lands did not bring immediate return in the precious metals (then conceived as the only wealth of nations) the short-sighted monarch listened to his detractors and stripped him of his honors. But these interesting facts as well as his death in poverty and neglect, do not belong to this history.

Exploration and Settlement in America.

The fever of maritime discovery now seized all coast nations. The same Abraham Zacuto, whose Almanac and Astronomical Tables had been of such aid to Columbus, now an exile in Portugal, was consulted by its king, Dom Manuel, as to a proposed expedition of Vasco da Gama to seek a sea route to India round the African coast. Zacuto had already devised, at the royal request, a storm chart for safer guidance of ships round the Cape of Good Hope. This famous explorer, da Gama,

was further aided by a Jew named after him (Gaspar da Gama), a Portuguese exile whom he picked up at Goa. An experienced traveller and mariner, he aided in the discovery of Brazil and gave such valuable information to Amerigo Vespucci, that King Manuel conferred rank upon him.

Although Columbus would fain have kept the newly-discovered lands for the exclusive settlement of Catholics,—Jews, secret or confessed, became the first who succeeded in opening up their trade resources. They exported precious stones from Brazil and imported grain. They transplanted, it is said, sugar from Madeira to Brazil and undoubtedly maintained the largest sugar plantations there.

But the vital importance of America's discovery for the Jews, lay in the fact that it was a new haven of refuge for this harassed people. Hither fled Portuguese Jews and Spanish Maranos from inquisitorial flames. At first Brazil was utilized by the Portuguese as a penal colony, and Jews were transported there as a place of exile. But so persistent was the animosity against them, just as soon as it was noticed that they *sought* it as a place of refuge, their emigration from Portugal was hindered by heavy fines and later by complete confiscations. Not till the Jews had paid Portugal the immense indemnity of 1,700,000 crusados in 1577 was their emigration and settlement allowed.

Alas, when they reached Brazil, their first place of considerable settlement, and supposed they could openly live the Jewish life and introduce Jewish worship without disguise, they found a branch of the dreaded Inquisition installed.

Spain prohibited Jews from settling in its colonies and

it set up tribunals in Lima and Peru for those who did. No wonder that when Holland had wrenched itself from despotic Spain and became an independent land, granting freedom of conscience to all, that the Jews in South America should have sided with the protecting Dutch against the persecuting Portuguese in their fight for the possession of Brazil.

We get visions of Jewish settlement in Mexico only from their funeral pyres. In the Island of St. Thomas we meet them only as baptized children severed from their parents. They were to be found in Peru mostly in Marano disguise.

Their settlement in other parts of South America and in North America takes us into the seventeenth century and is treated in the closing volume of this series.

To the Western Hemisphere came the Jews then, not as exploiters but as settlers; not merely to snatch gold from its soil, but to enrich it with their enterprise. With the establishment of the independence of the United States, the tide of Jewish emigration has moved steadily westward, readjusting its centre of gravity and adding a new and brighter chapter to the dark records of Israel's history.

"When the tale of bricks is increased then comes Moses," is a rabbinical dictum. Whenever Israel's sufferings become insupportable, Providence sends a deliverer. As Poland was opened and Turkey, when the rest of Europe was either imprisoning or expelling them and planning the eradication of their Faith,—so the discovery of America was destined to give them a new lease of life. It was their survival of the "fifteen century tragedy" that suggested the famous dictum, "Israel is the marvel of history."

The Jew has survived persecution; whether he will be able to survive emancipation is a question that the historian of the future alone can answer.

Notes and References.

Columbus:

Abraham Zacuto found refuge later in Tunis and died in Turkey. See *Christopher Columbus;* Kayserling; Index. This entire book, translated by Dr. Charles Gross, will be found delightful reading.

Coinage Table:

1 Maravedi — 3 mills (American Coinage)
383 Maravedi — 1 ducat.
490 Maravedi — 1 doubloon.
2210 Maravedi — 1 mark of silver.
A crusado — 70 cents (U. S.)

Inquisition in South America:

For names and details of victims of the Inquisition in South America and Mexico see *Publications of American Jewish Historical Society,* especially Nos. iv and vii.

Re-read the Introduction.

Theme for Discussion:

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